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THE WIND HARP,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

ELLEN CLEMENTINE HOWARTH.

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1876.
CITY of WASHINGTON.

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POEMS OF SENTIMENT.

THE WIND HARP.

Harp of the winds, thy fitful music blending
With spirit dreams, gives many a fancy birth;
Now to the loftiest dome of heaven ascending,
Now wailing through the catacombs of earth;
And now I hear thee through the old oak's branches,
Proclaim each subject's genealogy;
Now rushing down in wild Alp avalanches,
And now exulting with the boundless sea;
And now thou goest back with mournful sighing
Through unknown centuries, pausing, hushed at last,
Among dead glories unrecorded, lying
In the dim chambers of the solemn past.

Harp of the winds, with more than love's devotion
When sadly bending over earthly graves,
I hear thee moaning through the depths of ocean,
Seeking the dead among its coral caves;
And now I hear thy whispers low and loving,
Breathed o'er each form with sorrowful caress,
Not chiding him for years of reckless roving,
But with a mother's mournful tenderness.

Thou hast no cypress vine nor weeping willow,
But, with the seaweed and the coral stem,
Thou makest beautiful his lonely pillow,
While singing mournfully his requiem.

Harp of the winds, now comes thy mellow winding
Like siren's call through ocean's pearly shell,
The restless souls of mortals strangely binding
In weird enchantment with thy magic spell.
Now like a phantom bark with treasure golden,
Thou'lt tempt the fated dreamer to pursue;
Now like a god in Pagan temple olden,
Woe, if thy gloomy oracles were true!
Thou'lt chide the bard with his neglected mission,
Thou'lt tear the laurels from ambition's tomb,
Thou'lt paint alternately each old tradition,
In Raphael brightness and in Rembrandt gloom.

Harp of the winds, thou leadest me through ruins
Where steel-clad Templar Knights were wont to rove,
Where thou didst win, with thy persuasive wooings,
The heart that dared not yield to woman's love.
Now where those Gothic windows' deep recesses
Are wreathed with banners of the ivy green,
Once gentle wood nymphs twined their golden tresses,
And wandering zephyrs touched the cords unseen.
And where the homeless bard hung on the willow
His minstrel harp, beneath the moon's pale beams,
The fairies held their revels round his pillow,
Weaving fantastic spells around his dreams.

Harp of the winds, thou couldst not pass unheeding
That hermit cell, with altar-cloth of moss,
Or see unmoved that saint crusader leading
To Palestine the warriors of the Cross.
Thou'lt sing a dirge for those whose dust is lying
Unknelled, uncoffined on the desert sands,—
Those who went forth to win, with faith undying,
The Holy Sepulchre from Pagan hands.
Thou'lt bring the relics of their mournful story,—
The pilgrim's staff and kingly diadem:
Ah, earth hath many a record of their glory,
And many a quaint memorial of them.

Harp of the winds, one moment thou art straying
Through lone cathedral aisles and shadowy glooms,
Then through the boughs of old Hymettus playing,
Then with Mortality among the tombs.
How strangely thou dost blend the past and present,—
The maiden's heart-dream with the victor's grave;
Now thou dost woo a prince, and now a peasant,
Now bless a ruler, now the veriest slave.
Now through the reed-pipe of the shepherd calling
The timid flocks which round the mountains glide;
Now wailing wildly o'er the red drops falling,
O Agnus Dei, from Thy wounded side.

Harp of the winds, I listen almost frantic
To the wild music of thy mystic strain;
Vain are my poor, weak words to note each antic
Of thy weird spirit through my dreaming brain.

Thou dost not bring me Dante's fearful vision,
But thou dost give all lighter fancies birth,
Steeping my weary heart in joys Elysian,
Amid the daily toils and tears of earth.
Harp of the winds, well art thou called immortal,
Thou gentle spirit with bewildering spell;
My vine-wreathed lattice thou hast made a portal
For angel guests,—Harp of the winds, farewell!

THE SPIRIT OF POESY.

All hail,—the wanderer cometh back,
Her white wings flutter on the breeze,
A line of glory marks her track,
O'er fragrant hills and summer seas;
The air is haunted by her breath,
The fainting blooms revive again,
And even by the couch of death,
She wins the mourner from his pain,
As in the old impassioned strain
She sendeth greeting.

The minstrel in his darkened room
Forgotten, mourned her absence long,
But now she sweeps, with silver plume,
The shadows from the halls of song;

The curtain's fold is thrown apart,
The dust is shaken from the lyre,
And in the minstrel's dreaming heart,
She wakes the old magnetic fire,
And sends along the ringing wire
This strain of greeting.

She met your sisters on the shore,
Your pale-browed brothers on the wave,
She bade the artist youth explore
The dark ravine and mystic cave.
She called him to the mountain peak,
To watch the distant vessel's prow,
And kissed to bloom his pallid cheek,
And tossed the dark hair from his brow,
And to the hearts that love him,—now
She sendeth greeting.

But to the bard she telleth more,—
The secret things of shore and wave,
Wild tales of legendary lore,
From mountain pass and hidden cave,—
More than the student, artist, sage,
Of earthly beauty ever knew;
Her brilliant panorama page
Spreads out before the minstrel's view,
And fires his wild harp, while to you
He sendeth greeting.

What careless hearts will soon forget,
One soul with dreams of beauty fills,
To pour in streams of gladness yet,
Where'er the wayward minstrel wills.
And thus the wanderer cometh back,
Her white wings floating on the breeze,
A line of glory on her track,
O'er fragrant hills and summer seas,
And to the loved in strains like these
She sendeth greeting.

YOURS TILL DEATH.

Yours till death,—and thus it ends
His letter,—but mine eyes are dim.
He was the truest of all friends.
Well may I weep to think of him.
Beneath the sod he sleepeth now,
With name unstained by slander's breath,
And, gazing on that written vow,
My heart respondeth,—yours till death.

I keep the pale exotic still
He sent with prayer to hope and wait,
Yet with a heart foreboding ill,
I read its language,—"Desolate."
The odor of that foreign bloom
Bears still to me his dying breath,
And, like a whisper from the tomb,
That solemn promise,—yours till death.

Deep in my heart his image lies,
Though lips are pale and glances dim,
And I have sealed from careless eyes
The sacred page that speaks of him;
And many wonder if my heart
Hath ever thrilled to passion's breath,
So cold and calm I act my part,
My soul still breathing,—yours till death.

Yet dark and dreary are the days,
O best beloved, since thou art gone,
As through the world's bewildering maze,
With hopeless heart I struggle on.
And though unthinking lips may chill
My dreams of thee with icy breath,
Deep in my heart I treasure still
That early promise,—yours till death.

Let others scatter, burn, destroy
The relics of the loved and lost;
To me they yield a priceless joy,
For every tear-drop they have cost;
And when my heart with troubled swell
Turns from the world's deceitful breath,
'Tis sweet to think *one* loved me well,
And breathe the promise,—yours till death.

THE RESOLVE.

Yes, 'tis the same—
The very same old story
My lips have told my heart for many a day,
When softly came
A gleam of dreamland glory,
And always swept my good resolves away.

I, who should bring
The ones I love a blessing,
And in their toils and sorrows bear a part,
Thus idly sing,
While cares are on them pressing,
And adding grief to many a faithful heart.

Yet, o'er and o'er,
I say, in tones of sorrow,
My hands shall learn to work, my heart to pray;
Yet evermore
Deferring till to-morrow
The work and prayer appointed for to-day.

You bring, my friend,
The sunshine to your dwelling,
Your life of active kindness ever cheers;
While mine I spend
Of Christian duties telling,
Yet leaving my loved home to gloom and tears.

AMONG THE GRAVES.

Among forgotten graves
I too have wandered oft at midnight hour,
But not where o'er white stones the willow waves,
Or incense floats from nightly breathing flower;
But o'er the lonely graves in mine own heart,
Where love and friendship hath been buried long,
Where names are traced by sorrow's sculpture art
That never yet were breathed in jest or song;
'Tis here, forgotten by the careless throng,
I muse among the graves.

Here lies my buried hope,
With girlhood faith torn from its fragile stem.
Alas! no Resurrection day shall ope
The earthly gates of light and life to them.
Are those grim ghosts, in winding-sheet and shroud,
Which haunt at midnight hour those silent aisles,
One half so lonely as the spirit proud
That like a spectre passes through the crowd,
And while its pale, sad face is wreathed with smiles,
Is thinking of the graves?

There is no weary heart,
It matters not how reckless it hath been,
But mid its desert life hath left apart
Some little spot which tears keep fresh and green,—
The memory of some little golden head
Laid on that heart to still its passions strong,

Some early love, whose tender sweetness shed
A charm that lives through sorrow, sin, and wrong,
And mid the loudest laugh, the wildest song,
Reminds us of the dead.

IN ABSENCE.

THOU'RT absent, yet I am not lone
Or sad, as many hearts would be,
For I can hear in music's tone
All that thy lips would say to me.
In the rich organ, soft and clear,
And in the gentle, sweet guitar,
The spirit of thy love is near,
Though thy dear form may be afar.

Thou'rt absent, yet I tend thy flowers,
And watch them open day by day,
Like new-born hopes, to cheer the hours
While thou art from my side away.
I bless each tiny censer cup,
The south wind swings so light and free;
Its fragrant incense sending up
With benediction prayer for thee.

Thou'rt absent, yet each balmy breeze
Comes with thy kiss to cheek and brow;
And in its murmur through the trees,
I hear again the parting vow.

And then it brings the silver chime
  Of bells, and low on bended knee,
At morn, at noon, and vesper time,
  I breathe the Angelus for thee.

Thou'rt absent, yet not loved the less,—
  Each gift of thine is still as dear;
As tenderly I call and bless
  Thy name, as if thou still wert near.
I practise still each saintly art,
  To be what thou wouldst have me be;
Yet after all my erring heart
  Is nearest Heaven when nearest thee.

THE SERENADE.

I KNEW not who the singers were,
  Nor whence they came, nor where they went,
I only knew the tender air,
  That for another's ear was meant,
Stole with its mellow tones to mine,
  As, hidden by the lattice shade,
I saw dark forms in moonlight shine,
  And heard the plaintive serenade.

Strange, that a song which long ago
  Was idly penned at thy behest,
Should come in murmurs soft and low
  To haunt me in mine hour of rest!

Strange, that the voices seemed like theirs
That sang beneath the linden shade
In our old home! Ah, tears and prayers
Are woven in that serenade!

Have they come back, that loving band,
From their far wanderings o'er the earth?
Those exiles from their native land,
Seek they once more the dear old hearth?
Call they the loved? Their call is vain,—
The gentle lips in silence laid
Will never breathe their names again,
Or sing the tender serenade.

Why, midnight minstrels, came ye here?
Why should ye sing the plaintive strain
That falls upon my listening ear,
And brings my girlhood back again?
The last of those, that laughing band
That twined the minstrel's floral braid,
Behind the lattice bars I stand,
And listen to the serenade.

Now all are gone, I know not where,
Voice, violin and mellow flute
Have poured their sweetness on the air,
And once again are hushed and mute.
Not so my heart; its mournful wail
Will not be hushed nor tears be stayed,
For loving lips are cold and pale
That warbled once that serenade.

MY KINGDOM.

I SIT alone in the gathering gloom,
And wave my sceptre, a fairy wand,
And lo! in an instant my little room
Is changed to a kingdom grand.
There are palace walls,
And stately halls,
And a crowd of kneeling subjects near;
And a royal crown on my brown hair falls,
For I am a monarch here.

I wave my wand, and the ages rise,
Like the dreams of youth, on the morning air,
And all that is beautiful, great, or wise,
Is borne to my kingdom fair;
And the wisdom page
Of the Pagan sage,
And the Druid priest with his mystic lore,
And the relics of a former age,
Are found on the earth once more.

I wave my wand, and the Indian isles
Have brought their treasures to deck my throne;
For I rule where eternal summer smiles,
And where winter was never known.
And the sanguine sports
Of the savage courts,
Like a panorama's page I see;
Kings, castles and kingdoms, fields and forts,
Are called, and they come to me.

I wave my wand, and a glorious band
Of warrior youths to my presence spring;
And rich are the gifts from the Holy Land
Those mailed crusaders bring.
They are jewels rare,
That a queen might wear,
And regal robes of texture fine;
But one gift most dear those warriors bear
From the plains of Palestine.

I wave my wand, and a thousand lyres
Wake in my halls, and the dead bards sing;
But where is the voice that my soul inspires,
Like the voice of the poet king?
Solemn and grand
Doth the monarch stand,
And his mournful *miserere* pour:
My tears flow fast, I have dropped my wand,
I awake, and my reign is o'er.

THOU WILT NEVER GROW OLD.

Thou wilt never grow old,
Nor weary nor sad, in the home of thy birth;
My beautiful lily, thy leaves will unfold
In a clime that is purer and brighter than earth.
O holy and fair, I rejoice thou art there,
In that kingdom of light, with its cities of gold;
Where the air thrills with angel hosannas, and where
Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
Never grow old!

I am a pilgrim, with sorrow and sin
  Haunting my footsteps wherever I go;
Life is a warfare my title to win,—
  Well will it be if it end not in woe.
Pray for me, sweet, I am laden with care;
  Dark are my garments with mildew and mould;
Thou, my bright angel, art sinless and fair,
    And will never grow old, sweet,
      Never grow old!

Now, canst thou hear from thy home in the skies,
  All the fond words I am whispering to thee?
Dost thou look down on me with the soft eyes,
  Greeting me oft ere thy spirit was free?
So I believe, though the shadows of time
  Hide the bright spirit I yet shall behold;
Thou wilt still love me, and, pleasure sublime,
    Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
      Never grow old!

Thus wilt thou be when the pilgrim, grown gray,
  Weeps when the vines from the hearthstone are riven;
Faith shall behold thee, as pure as the day
  Thou wert torn from the earth and transplanted to
    Heaven.
O, holy and fair, I rejoice thou art there,
  In that kingdom of light, with its cities of gold,
Where the air thrills with angel hosannas, and where
    Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
      Never grow old!

TO MARY.

My best beloved, for thee
My harp rings out a tender strain,
And loving fancies, wild and free,
Take up the sweet refrain;
And silver stream and willow bough
Dance to the magic numbers now,
As softly steals my gentle lay,
To thee, my love, my blooming May,*
My queenly Mary.

May was, in olden times,†
A tender maiden, fair and young,
And royal bards, in golden rhymes,
Her wondrous beauty sung;
And lovers to her festal tree
Their offerings brought on bended knee,
And trilled the votive roundelay,
Like this I sing for thee to-day,
My gentle Mary.

On many an antique shrine,
Hid sweetly in Italian bowers,
A Mary stands,—a form divine,
All garlanded with flowers;

---

* May, a pet name for Mary. The month of May is often called the month of Mary.

† "May was maid in olden time."
SOMEBODY.

And often to such calm retreat,
In picturesque garb and sandalled feet,
The weary pilgrim wends his way,
To ask her prayers. O wilt thou pray
For me, my Mary?

And at the vesper hour,
*Ave Maria** sweetly swells
From old cathedral dome and tower,
Rung by a thousand bells;
And from the mountains clear and high
Comes back the human-voiced reply,
Ave Maria! So to thee
I breathe my strain on bended knee,
My gentle Mary.

When, dearest, wilt thou come,
In thy young beauty, bright and gay,
To scatter in my heart and home
The buds and blooms of May,—
To make thy realm a charmed sphere,
One gay, glad summer all the year?
Oh! not the brightest dream can paint
Thy power, my flower, my queen, my saint,
My peerless Mary.

---

* *Ave Maria*, Hail Mary.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

'Tis a beautiful thought, as we bend above
The form of one whose spirit hath fled,
Who in life we loved with the fondest love,
That our prayers may avail in the realms of the dead
The passionate eyes will ope no more,
The heart thrill not to our fond embrace,
But the soul, the soul on the shadowy shore,
Doth it pine for the light of the Saviour's face?

We may not know, but 'tis sweet to think,
That the prayers we breathe and the tears we shed
May lighten some burden or loosen some link
That fetters the souls of our kindred dead.
We mourn not as those who have no hope;
We believe the departed, when free from sin,
Will see the gates of God's kingdom ope,
And the children of sorrow shall enter in.

And thou, beloved, if thine eyes should close
Before mine own on this earthly sphere,
'Twill be sweet to pray for thy soul's repose,
As I daily pray for thy welfare here.
If the heart that loves thee can win thee grace,
Then short will the time of thine exile be;
For I know in the light of the Saviour's face,
Thou wilt pray for her who has prayed for thee.

THE FADED BOUQUET.

Sweet, throw not thou blossoms away,
Though faded and scentless they be;
They have bloomed on my mantel for many a day,
And brought tender memories to me.
I know that the room must be dusted and swept,
But take up those blossoms, I pray;
I am sure in the drawer where my treasures are kept,
There is room for the faded bouquet.

Nay, speak not so scornfully, sweet,
Of that "drawer and its trash without end,"
And, child, never crush 'neath thy feet
A blossom, the gift of a friend.
For well do I know to that warm heart of thine
That there will come surely a day,
When memories as tender and mournful as mine
Will cling to a faded bouquet.

Harsh words may be spoken in jest,
And those whom we love may be grieved,
Or friends may prove fickle, for few are so blest
That, trusting, are never deceived.
And dear ones as strangers may hastily meet,
And idols prove basest of clay,
But never, through all, let a friend 'neath thy feet
Be thrown like that faded bouquet.

Thou, darling, I meant not to chide,
For tender and loving thou art,
And little the world, with its fashion and pride,
Will care for these blooms of the heart.
But I own I was grieved when you scornfully smiled,
And brushed the dead blossoms away.
Ah! when you are older and wiser, my child,
You will think of this faded bouquet.

HEART'S TREASURE.

'Tis but a little faded flower,
But oh, how sadly dear!
It brings me back one golden hour
Through many a weary year.
I may not to the world impart
The secret of its power,
But, treasured in my woman's heart,
I keep my faded flower.

A broken ring—a dream of life—
A wild, mysterious spell—
That whispers more of spirit strife
Than words could ever tell.
A fairy fountain, from whose tide
A thousand visions spring,
That round my heart in memories glide
From out the broken ring.

A slender tress of golden hair,
That graced a dear one's brow,
A year ago so warm and fair,
But cold and faded now:
Yet peacefully the infant sleeps,
All pure and undefiled,
While mournfully the mother weeps
Her little angel child.

Where is the heart that doth not keep,
Within its inmost core,
Some fond remembrance, hidden deep,
Of days that are no more!
Who hath not saved some trifling thing,
More prized than jewels rare,—
A faded flower, a broken ring,
Or tress of golden hair!

REMEMBRANCE.

Do I forget thee? thou whose smile was ever
A brilliant star to light my weary lot?
Ah, no! believe, though fate hath bade us sever,
My first beloved, thou canst not be forgot.
I strain my eyes no longer to behold thee,
Nor longer listen for thy coming feet,
But to my heart of hearts I fondly fold thee,—
Here shalt thou linger till it cease to beat,
Nor loved less truly though we ne'er should meet.

Do I forget thee? Oh, thou little knowest
How I have worshipped thee as one divine,
And listened to thy strains when breathed the lowest,
And caught the shadow of my thoughts from thine.
How I have spent the precious hours in dreaming,
Aye, idly dreaming, for I dreamed of thee,
While mind and heart with wasting wealth was teeming,
And leaves were fading from life's early tree,
That ne'er shall summer bloom or autumn harvest see.

Do I forget thee? 'Mid thy toils and pleasures
Thou canst not know the thoughts of lonely hours;
Thou canst not judge the heart whose only treasures
Are fondly cherished words and faded flowers.
Therefore will I forgive thee, though I wonder
How thou couldst fancy thou wouldst be forgot.
Mine is a love nor time nor space can sunder;
And as I trace each old familiar spot,
I think thee present though I see thee not.

I ask for no return, but when thou hearest,
In thy far distant home, my mournful strain,
For sake of other days, wilt thou not, dearest,
Take up the harp and answer back again?
I do not sigh for thee, nor yet regret thee,
Nor do I vainly wish we ne'er had met,
But it is vain to ask, do I forget thee?
Mine is a heart that never can forget:
The love of earlier years is stainless, changeless yet.

THE STRANGER'S GRAVE.

One bright spring morning, long ago,
They found him by the river's side.
His name or kindred none might know,
Nor whence he came, nor how he died.

His humble dress and forehead brown
Bespoke a wanderer o'er the wave.
With careless hands they laid him down,
Nor raised the earth above his grave.
And now, with heavy, heedless tread,
They trample daily o'er his head.

What need had he of shroud or stone?
What right had he to priest or prayer?
He was a stranger, poor and lone,
And he hath met a stranger's care.
Aye, tramp him down; no heart will heed,
No gentle voice will plead to save.
It were too much that e'en a weed
Should blossom on the stranger's grave.
Why need we care? our loved ones sleep
Where roses bloom and willows weep.

Yet oftentimes my woman's heart
Thrills strangely as I pass the spot,
And often will the teardrops start
While musing o'er his shrouded lot.

I soothe my child with murmurs low,
And fold it fondly to my breast.
Alas, alas! how may I know
What hands may lay its bones to rest?
While I, who would have died to save,
May know not of that lonely grave.

THE BAPTISM OF TEARS.

Come, I will sing for thee a gentle lay,
Like those I sang thee oft in happier hours,
And tender thoughts, like summer's golden ray,
Shall light once more my heart of withered flowers.
Bring me the lute, and I will wake again
Its thrilling tones to passion's hopes and fears.
Ah idle dream! wild promise sadly vain!
Its every chord hath been baptized in tears.

And I am changed. My sad yet tranquil brow
Doth crimson not beneath thine earnest gaze.
My hand doth tremble not to greet thee now,
As it hath trembled in our earlier days.
My cheek betrays no more the passing thought,
My eye the saddened trace of sorrow wears;
Yet oh, how dearly was this calmness bought!
For every thrill hath been subdued by tears.

I may no more reveal, by sudden start,
My love for thee, when others speak thy name;
For I have learned, at last, to veil my heart,
Though every inmost feeling were the same.
Nor shall I wildly grieve if thou forget
How I have loved thee, long and weary years;
Nor chide thee more, in passionate regret,—
For e'en thy love hath caused me bitter tears.

Thou hast more power than all things else to move
My soul to passion; yet not even thou
Mayst read again my deep undying love,
By quivering lip, pale cheek, or clouded brow.
A sea of sorrow rolls its waves between
This greeting and the clasp of earlier years;
And thy loved image in my heart hath been
Baptized and purified by burning tears.

VESPER HYMN.

"At three P. M., after a journey of thirty miles, the Indians all at once turned their canoe to a deserted beach, and told us we were arrived at Sarayacu. The absence of any signs of habitation, and the dark forest which surrounded the beach, made us believe for the instant that we were the victims of some terrible mistake. We thought that the mission so ardently desired had been abandoned. We set ourselves to search out a path through the forest, but without success. We were completely discouraged, and our eyes filled with tears. We were thus sadly detained on the beach, when towards nine o'clock we thought we heard singing in the woods. The voices soon became distinct, and we could recognize the air."—*Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon.*

Lo! the darkness gathers o'er us,
Not the shadows from the pine;
'Tis the night, and far before us
Gleam the tapers on thy shrine.

When upon the dancing waters
Barks are moored, as day grows dim,
Sweet Madonna, we thy daughters
Meet to sing thy vesper hymn.

If some traveller in the forest,
Through the darkness lose his way,
In his hour of need the sorest,
Aid him with thy gentle ray.

Aid our brothers on the billows,
Thou the sailor's guiding star;
May no danger reach their pillows,
While they sleep from home afar.

Pray for all, both friend and stranger,
On the shore and on the wave;
If our loved are near to danger,
Sweet Madonna, guide and save.

THY NAME, MY DEAREST.

I HEARD it spoken 'mid the crowd
That gathered in the house of prayer,
A sweet voice whispered it aloud,
Not dreaming that a heart was there
That trembled like a frightened bird,
As that forbidden sound was heard;
A face that paler grew, as came
So softly syllabled thy name,
My dearest!

It quivered on that girlish tongue,
The sacred name, that many years
In my lone heart, all crushed and wrung,
Had been preserved by bitter tears,
And oft was sent, in thoughts of love,
Upon the wings of prayer above,—
Unspoken prayer: words could not frame
The yearnings clustered round thy name,
My dearest!

What magic hath that simple sound,
That lips should quiver, tears should start?
What is the spell that hath unbound
The secret feelings of the heart?
Is it to honor, love, or pride,
Or unto sin and scorn allied?
They know thee not who think that shame
Could ever rest upon thy name,
My dearest!

Perhaps it was a summer dream,
Born in the days of young romance;
Perhaps a quick magnetic gleam,
Struck from a dark eye's lightning glance.
Perhaps long years of kindness,—well,
It matters not what wove the spell;
It shed a pure, undying flame
Of hallowed glory round thy name,
My dearest!

Is he not guilty, he who strives
To crush affection? They shall say
Whose wrecked vocations, wasted lives,
Drift on to ruin day by day.
If we upon the waters wide,
Are at the mercy of the tide,
Not thine the fault, no shade of blame
Shall ever rest upon thy name,
My dearest!

MUSIC.

Sweet is the tender minstrel strain
When the loved are near,
Blending a pleasant pain
With a smile and tear;
Lulling in blissful trance
Life's beautiful romance,
Closing the heart to sorrow, care, and fear.

Sweet is the dirge we softly pour
For the gentle dead,
Bidding the mourners weep no more
For the spirit fled;
Turning to loftier things
The heart that wildly clings
To the dear sleeper in her silent bed.

Sweet is the mother's lullaby
At the even hour,
Hushing the infant's wailing cry
With its wondrous power;
Wooing the wings of sleep,
Praying for God to keep
All sin and danger from her household flower.

Sweet in the house of praise and prayer
Is the organ's strain;
Sweet is the hunter's Alpine air
To the lowly swain.

Wheresoever, far or near,
Music reaches mortal ear,
'Tis the soul of tender sadness, love, and pain.

REST.

HERE at last is rest;
Trustingly these words I said,
And upon my loved one's breast
Laid my weary head.
O how many hopeless years
I had toiled in pain and tears,
Seeking rest; now all is past,
And my prayer is heard at last,
Here is rest.

But a little while,
And I found how frail the reed,
I with fond confiding smile
Trusted in my need.
Foolish heart, that dared to trust
But a sinful child of dust
With its peace. Well, love is past,
Calm indifference comes at last,—
Here is rest.

Still my heart would rove,—
What is life without an aim?
Let the heart deceived by love
Seek the wreath of fame.

Twine the laurel round the brow,
Teach earth's haughty ones to bow:
Genius winneth wealth and power;
In the triumphs of the hour
I will rest.

Then I thought of thee,*
Royal-hearted child of song,
From thy birthplace forced to flee,
Crowned with scorn and wrong.
Death upon thy step awaits,
Shouldst thou pass thy city gates,
Thou, a monarch at thy birth,
Wandering homeless o'er the earth,
Seeking rest.

Rest! there is no rest,
Changeful earth, on thy green sod:
Let me fly to Thy true breast,
Saviour, Son of God.
Never more shall love betray,
Fame or pleasure lead astray;
New-born soul, thy toils are past,—
Shout thy victor cry at last,
Here is rest!

* Dante.

WORDS FOR MUSIC.

THESE are simple words thou hearest,
But endowed with magic art,
If thou'lt only sing them, dearest,
To the music of the heart.
Dim would be the poet's splendor,
Golden words and silver rhyme,
Were it not for gushings tender,
Flowing from such lips as thine.
And the simple words thou hearest,
Joy and sweetness will impart,
If thou'lt only sing them, dearest,
To the music of the heart.

Thou canst throw the fair ideal,
Mirrored from the dreamer's brain,
In a form divinely real,
Back upon his soul again,
Till the sad old recollections
Hide in memory's ivied towers,
And the young and glad affections
Dance like maidens wreathed with flowers.
With the simple words thou hearest,
Thou canst make the ghouls depart;
For I know thou'lt sing them, dearest,
To the music of the heart.

Let thy voice send back the shadows,
Call the sunshine in once more;
Woo the breath from dreamland meadows
Softly through the open door.

Where a sad, sad heart awaiteth
But a single tone from thee;
That the bonds his spirit hateth
May be burst and set him free.
And these simple lines thou hearest,
Hath this talismanic art,
If thou'lt only sing them, dearest,
To the music of the heart.

FIRST LOVE.

Come, sing those old romantic lays,
The lays that my first lover sung;
They bring me back those halcyon days
When life was bright, and I was young.
The rose hath faded from my cheek,
Mine eyes are dimmed by frequent tears,
And my lost love would vainly seek
The charms he prized in earlier years,
If he could look upon me now,
With weary heart and faded brow.

Bring me the wreath of wildwood flowers
My first love braided for my hair,—
Take ye the crown that later hours
Hath won me,—I would rather wear
The simple blossoms prized by him,
Than laurel wreath or brilliant gems;

And this pale braid, with tear-drops dim,
Is dearer than the diadems
Of queens. Yet take it from my brow:
It is the heart's memorial now.

A dark hand cast my horoscope,
And 'neath a dire unlucky star
My heart gave birth to love and hope:
Now hope is dead and love afar.
And yet those old familiar lays,
That simple wreath of wildwood flowers,
Bring back the love of other days,
And in my heart's forsaken bowers,
With faded wreath and broken vow,
I brood in tearful silence now.

ENTHUSIASM.

Well, the long agony is past,
The hour of dread suspense is o'er,
And I can sit me down at last
And freely breathe once more.
How could I touch the minstrel lyre,
Or who would stay my strain to hear,
While human voices, high and higher,
Burst like the awful cry of fire
Upon the listening ear,
And my wild spirit caught the spell?
Huzza! book, lyre and pen, farewell!

And now in quiet thoughtful mood,
At midnight, in my silent room,
Far from the restless multitude,
With music, banner, plume,
I calmly view the distant throng,
Their sympathetic hopes and fears,
Their love of right, their hate of wrong,
Their faith in freedom firm and strong,
And my glad soul reveres
That mystic fire, whose thrill imparts
Strength to the brotherhood of hearts.

Amid the thousands in the street
One common thought is breathed aloud,
And hearts re-echo, lips repeat
That murmur through the crowd.
Thus minstrel strain and saintly prayer,
The voice of preacher, teacher, friend,
With simple utterance thrills the air:
Ah! little know we when or where
Its influence may end,
Or how one spoken word controls
The welfare of immortal souls.

THE PASSION FLOWER.

I PLUCKED it in an idle hour
And placed it in my book of prayer:
'Tis not the only passion flower
That hath been crushed and hidden there;

And now through floods of burning tears
My withered bloom once more I see,
And I lament the long, long years,
The wasted years afar from Thee.

My flower is emblem of the bright
"First fervor" that my spirit knew,
A dream of beauty, joy and light,—
Now pale and dead it meets my view.
What is there left of dream or flower
But ashes? Take, I pray, from me,
All my vain thoughts of fame and power,
And draw my spirit nearer Thee.

I have no olive leaf to bring
From the wild waste of waters dark;
For like the dove, my weary wing
Can find no refuge but the ark.
Take me once more to thy true breast,
Save me from passion's stormy sea:
There is on earth no place of rest
For my wild spirit save in Thee.

Oh! would some prophet might arise
To touch my lips with fervent fire!
Would some bright spirit from the skies
Might tune to sacred strains my lyre!
With soul refined from earthly dross,
And heart from human passions free,
I'd be the laureate of the Cross,
And dedicate my life to Thee.

My passion flower was once a part
Of this high vision of renown,
But now within its withered heart
I see the cross but not the crown;
And now with love's repentant tears
I come once more on bended knee,
Lamenting for the long, long years,
The wasted years afar from Thee.

SOMETHING MORE.

Fair girl, thy bower of dream romance
Is beautiful in fancy's ray:
Time hath not broke the blissful trance,
Nor chased the airy blooms away;
Yet doth it answer to thy need,
That antique tome of fairy lore?
Ah no, upon thy brow I read
The spirit's cry for something more.

Pale minstrel, thou hast won thy fame,—
The laurel wreath is on thy brow;
Ages unborn shall praise thy name,
And what hast thou to wish for now?
Art thou content? Those mournful eyes
In their quick glance the answer bore,—
Lost is thy youth, vain is the prize:
The spirit yearns for something more.

Young lover, but one month ago
I saw thee by the altar stand;
Thy fervent vow was whispered low,
And fondly clasped a small white hand;
She was thy hope, thy world, thy heaven,
Thy faith was plighted o'er and o'er;
Yet but thy heart to her was given,—
The spirit yearns for something more.

The maiden in her young romance,
The minstrel with his wreath of fame,
The lover with his passion glance,
All bear an answer still the same;
And I—not for my wasted youth
These tears of wild regret I pour,
For love, nor fame, nor broken truth,—
My spirit mourns for something more.

THE FIRST BORN.

It was not of the golden head
That lay so sweetly on my breast,
That I was thinking, when I said,
How peaceful is her rest;
But of a child as brightly fair,
That years ago had slumbered there,
A sinless angel guest.

'Twas of that white-robed cherub fled,
That I was thinking when I said,
How peaceful is her rest.
And lo! across the lyre's mute strings
I heard the rustle of light wings.

Once more I sung the lullaby,
That soothed to sleep mine angel child,
And smothered back the wailing cry
Of anguish deep and wild;
And clearer seems the loving care
That bears the priceless treasure where
Is neither moth nor rust,—
The chastening hand in tender love,
Leading with kindly clasp above,
A fragile child of dust.
Well may my spirit's trembling ring,
Repeat the strain the angels sing.

I murmured when the bitter cup
Came to my lips. I could not think
The angel child I yielded up,
Would form the brightest link
Between my soul and that blest sphere,
Where those so wildly mourned for here
Will once again be mine.
Where every earthly hope that dies
Is but another sacrifice,
My human heart the shrine,
Across whose wildly quivering strings
My white-robed angel sweeps her wings.

REMORSE.

I MOURN that I have ever spoken
A bitter, heartless word to thee;
Now that the "golden bowl is broken,"
The heart at rest, the spirit free.
I would not ask to be forgiven
While thou wert near,—I could not bow;
Alas! my soul to madness driven,
Bends o'er thy dust in anguish now.

O pale, cold lips! whose smile so often
Strove my proud spirit to subdue;
O dim, dead eyes! that once could soften
A very fiend,—so calm and true;
O snow-white hands! so coldly lying
Upon a breast whose throbs are o'er,—
The picture ye have left in dying,
Will haunt my soul forever more.

Away! this is no common sorrow
That every earthborn heart may feel;
Why tell me of a calmer morrow?
This is a wound time cannot heal.
O ye whose hearts are unforgiving,
Behold these tears in anguish shed,
And speak no word to loved ones living,
To weep for thus when they are dead.

APRIL.

I HAIL thee not as once,
With choral song and flower-wreathed brow;
My bosom beats no glad response
To thy wild music now.
Thy soft and balmy southern breath
Can never bring
The vernal spring
To lonely homes of change and death.

I love thee not as when,
With hopeful heart and bounding feet,
I sought the willow-shaded glen,
To cull thy violets sweet.
For I have seen those violets shed
Their fragrant bloom
Around the room
Where lay my blossoms pale and dead.

Then wherefore shouldst thou move
My soul with memories sad and deep?
I never more may wildly love,
No more may hopeless weep.
And though my heart thrills to the core
With griefs untold,
Thou canst unfold
Those wild soul writhings never more.

Like thee I brightly smile,
Like thee I call sweet blossoms forth,
While hiding in my heart the while
The chill winds of the North.
Why should the hearts that love me know
The tears I shed
For loved ones dead,
On whose green graves the violets grow?

THE LAND OF DREAMS.

I HAVE burst the chains that bound me to earthly care and pain,
And with night and silence round me, I take my lute again;
And the pale moon softly gleams,
As I slowly float along
Through the golden land of dreams,
On the silvery tide of song;
And my heart forgets its sighing, my soul its weary strife,
As I near that island lying 'mid the stormy sea of life.

Hard is the heart's wild clinging to hope, when care and doubt
With icy hands are wringing the very life-blood out.
Well may I turn mine eyes
To the balmy dream-land bowers,
Where the lute neglected lies,
Though wreathed with love's own flowers.
I wake its chords for others to many a mirthful tone,
Whose very gladness smothers the anguish of mine own.

Here grows no weeping willow, no mourning violet,
Love hath no night-shade pillow with passion tear-drops wet;
But holy, calm, and sweet,
Peace sheds its gentle beams
O'er parted ones who meet
In the golden land of dreams.
And the heart forgets its sighing, the soul its fruitless strife,
On that peaceful island lying 'mid the stormy sea of life.

Here seers on snow-wreathed mountains are with the palm branch found,
Here by Castalian fountains the bards are laurel crowned;
And here the youthful chief
Oft comes from hearth and board,
To twine the myrtle leaf
In garlands for his sword.
Sweet land of dreams! what wonder that hearts bound down with fear
Should burst their bonds asunder to find a refuge here?

Now quiet hearts are sleeping, but 'neath fair Luna's light
Less happy ones are keeping the tryst with mine to-night.
The mother in her lonely home,
The sailor on the sea,
Bard, maiden, lover, thronging come,
To watch the stars with me.
Ah! many hearts are sighing, in hopeless toil and strife,
For that sweet island lying 'mid the stormy sea of life.

EDGAR A. POE.

I AM thinking of the Raven, of the strain so deeply graven
On my heart and on my memory in the school-girl days of yore;
Of the mourner sick with sighing, on the velvet cushions lying,
And the fiend that kept replying, "Nevermore, nevermore."

'Tis but fancy, well I know it, midnight, lamplight, gloomy poet,
All the shadings of the picture, e'en the bust above the door;
But I hear the moaning river till my very heartstrings quiver,
And I cry, "Will none deliver from the tempter Nevermore?"

Will they ever be forgiven, they whose eyes have looked on heaven,
They whose ears have heard the music that the white-robed angels pour,
If to earthly paths returning, with their hearts with fervor burning,
They should walk 'mid pleasures, spurning earthly duties as before?

In the land of dreams enchanted, are we mortals always haunted
By the heavy burdens pressing till our hearts are sick and sore?

All our efforts unavailing to subdue one human failing,
Shall our spirits hush their wailing, Nevermore, Nevermore?

When the morning sun is beaming, wakened from this fearful dreaming,
I may look upon this picture, wondering at the gloom it wore;
But the look it now is wearing 'neath the street lamp's ghostly glaring,
Brings again that cry despairing,—Nevermore, Nevermore.

Hapless bard, I who inherit, not thy genius, but the spirit
To throw off all earthly bondage, and to seek the unknown shore,
Art thou from that land replying, to my questioning and sighing,
That I hear thy raven crying, "Evermore, Nevermore?"

JULIA.

How vain it is to tell me thou art dead,
When I behold thee near me all day long,
With sunbeams shedding halos round thy head,
And sweet harps blending with thy cradle-song.
And then I watch thy fragile form for hours,
Moving so quietly among the flowers,
Thou dost not startle butterfly or bee.

And then I hear thine answer to my call;
Now at the door I see thy shadows fall.
Thou dead! no, sweet, thou art not dead to me.

I know thy little form once met my sight
Laid in a coffin, like a snowdrift fair,
In thy baptismal robes, all pure and white,
And violets clustered in thy golden hair:
It was no parting kiss that then I gave;
And though I know there is a little grave,
With marble stone on which is traced thy name,
Yet thou, sweet angel of my home and heart,
Wert never more my child than now thou art:
I call thee, bless thee, love thee still the same

If not an earthly flower is vainly sent,
So not in vain wert thou, my rosebud, given:
The stubborn heart in springtime earthward bent,
Thou drawest back with silken bands to heaven.
And so thou movest round me day by day,
Breaking so tenderly my bands of clay,
And scattering blooms no other eyes may see,
Thou makest beautiful the rugged track,
To win the poor weak-hearted mother back
To God and heaven, mine angel child, and thee.

THOU AND I.

Yes, thy heart is lost forever,
And another holds the place
Once mine own; and never, never
More shall I behold thy face.
Turn away, then, and forget me,
Even that you ever met me
'Neath the azure sky;
Yet when young and tender-hearted
Met we here, and loved and parted,
Thou and I.

Prouder friends have gathered round thee
Since the happy days I name;
And admiring nations crowned thee
With the laurel wreath of fame.
And amid thy wealth and splendor,
For thy first love, true and tender,
Thou hast ceased to sigh:
I, like thee, my heart will smother;
We'll be strangers to each other,
Thou and I.

There's a flower upon my bosom,
Fondly treasured many a year;
Earth hath many a fairer blossom,
But not one to me as dear.

And thy cherished gift of morning,
Still unchanged by pride or scorning,
On my heart shall lie:
'Tis an emblem, pale and blighted,
Of the faith that once united
Thou and I.

If these lines one thought should waken
Of thy broken faith and vow,
Know, the heart by thee forsaken,
Would not care to win thee now.
Turn away then, and forget me,
Even that you ever met me
'Neath the azure sky;
Yet when young and truthful-hearted
Met we here, and loved and parted,
Thou and I.

THE DYING WIFE.

My life is swiftly closing. O my love,
A few short hours, and thou wilt be alone.
Yet do not weep; thou hast a Friend above,
To be thy comforter when I am gone.
I wished to tell thee this, my love, before
Death's near approach I could no longer hide;
And when thine eyes behold my form no more,
Remember, dearest, in what trust I died.

Nay, do not weep so wildly; dost thou know
How thou dost pain me by thy bitter grief?
A little while thou wilt be left below,
But life, even at the longest, is but brief.
Prepare to meet me, love, and for my sake,
Look up to heaven when thou art sorely tried;
Thy firm belief in God let nothing shake,—
Remember in that faith I lived and died.

And if, my love, when thy first grief shall fade,
Another flower be grafted on thy life,
Another head upon thy breast be laid,
And she shall ask of thy departed wife,
Tell her, my love, I followed, though afar,
The footsteps of my Saviour crucified;
Tell her, through life he was my guiding star,
And in his love I trusted when I died.

Now lay thy head upon my pillow, dear,
And kiss me once again before I die;
Speak not of life,—I may not linger here,—
But pray that we may meet again on high.
And when our little child climbs on thy knee,
And thou wilt look on her with love and pride,
And when her little lips shall ask of me,
Teach her my faith, and tell her how I died.

And now forgive me all that I have done,
To pain or grieve thee, through the fleeting years
That our two lives together flowed as one,
Bearing alike to each all hopes and fears.

And when the tears with which thy cheek is wet
Have ceased to flow,—nay, love, I do not chide,—
But promise me thou wilt not quite forget
The wife that on thy bosom drooped and died.

SWEET MIGNONETTE.

What! hidden by those gaudy flowers,
Verbenas and convolvulus!
Alas! how oft in happy hours
Are humble friends neglected thus.
Neglected, to be sought again
By hearts subdued by grief and pain,
And eyes too oft with teardrops wet,
As I seek thee, sweet Mignonette.

We turn from quiet eyes of blue,
To look in brilliant ones of black,
And find the serpent's charm too true,
When we would draw our glances back.
And then we leave the tender breast,
That in our childhood gave us rest,
Without one feeling of regret,
As I left thee, sweet Mignonette.

But when we find our idols clay,
All beauty vain, all goodness art,
Fame but a false deceitful ray,
And intellect without a heart,

Then with the wisdom sorrow brings,
We turn our hearts to lowlier things,
And blush that we could e'er forget
The friends like thee, sweet Mignonette.

When sadly at the casement low,
I knelt last night at midnight hour,
And turned my aching eyes below,
On leaf and tendril, bud and flower,
And wondered if aught could impart
One ray of comfort to my heart;
Ah! then with soothing, sweet regret,
I caught thy breath, sweet Mignonette.

And then I thought he whom I prize,
Though careless and neglectful now,
When tears shall dim his brilliant eyes,
And sorrow brood o'er heart and brow,
When prouder, happier friends in vain
Shall try all arts to soothe his pain,
Will seek the heart that loves him yet,
As I seek thee, sweet Mignonette.

STREW FLOWERS.

Strew flowers, not alone in the bridal path,
Nor on the tombs of the dead;
But in every place where an earth-child hath
A weary way to tread.

O for the Saviour's sake,
Take from thy plenteous bowers
A few fair blooms, and make
The wretched a path of flowers.

Strew flowers by the wayside wild,
In paths thou hast never trod,
Where many a weary child
Wanders afar from God;
Where the reaper's field but bears
Thorns for the harvest hours;
Where the wheat is choked with tares,
Strew flowers,—love's fragrant flowers.

Strew flowers in the wretched home
Of pestilence and sin,
Where the fresh air cannot come,
Nor the sunshine enter in.
When the guilty wretch shall start
From the corner where he cowers,
Then pour from thy pitying heart
The balm of a thousand flowers.

Strew flowers, nor pause to ask
Of country, name, or creed;
But bend to thy loving task,
And God will reward the deed.
God knows there is doubt enough
In this bitter world of ours;
Then over the pathways rough
Strew flowers,—the heart's fair flowers.

Strew flowers, though the vilest share
Thy gifts; darest thou condemn
While God doth in mercy spare,
And a Saviour still pleads for them?
O for that Saviour's sake,
Take from thy plenteous bowers
A few fair blooms, and make
The weary a path of flowers.

DOST THOU REMEMBER ME?

Dost thou remember me? Though lost forever
I cannot bear that thou shouldst quite forget.
I do not chide that fate hath bade us sever,
I only ask, am I remembered yet?
Say that thy heart some gentle dream retaineth,
Some memory of the hopes it prized of yore;
Though not a joy save this for me remaineth,
I am content; I ask from thee no more,
If thou rememberest me.

Long time I watched for thee with anxious yearning,
To hear thy voice and look upon thy face;
I love thee still, yet ask for no returning,
Save in thy thoughts to find a resting-place.
Speak thou to me, beloved, give me some token,—
A leaf, a flower,—and I will prize the sign
That whispers me of memories still unbroken;
That, though thy vows may never more be mine,
Thou wilt remember me.

'Tis twilight hour, the paths are all forsaken,
The wind sighs sadly through the willow tree,
Kissing the lute that never more may waken
The voice of song, unless it wake for thee.
'Twas thy dear hand that tuned those gentle numbers
That stole so softly on the summer air;
Thy hand alone can wake it from its slumbers:
The gentle lute is hushed in deep despair,
In memory of thee.

Take thou this wreath, 'twas twined for thee at morning,
Before the fragrant blooms were half awake;
Thou wilt not spurn, with looks of careless scorning,
The flowers that I have treasured for thy sake.
In every bud I breathed for thee a blessing,
And twined the braid with mingled song and prayer,
And though it droops with passionate caressing,
While gazing on the blossoms frail and fair,
Thou wilt remember me.

Perchance I do but dream, when on the morrow
Thou'lt read the passionate lines I trace for thee;
Perhaps thou'lt scorn the tone of hopeless sorrow
Breathed in these words,—dost thou remember me?
And thou mayst wonder when and where thou hast met me,
And task thy memory to recall my name;
But no, O no, thou couldst not thus forget me,
I who have loved thee more than wealth or fame,—
Thou wilt remember me.

TIME.

THOUGH centuries after centuries pass,
And earth is deep with human clay,
That traveller with the scythe and glass
Pursues his even way.
Onward, still on, in change and death,
We trace his steps in every clime;
And nations tremble at the breath
Of stern old conqueror, Time.

He points his fingers to the walls
Of temples towering to the skies;
And o'er their dust his footstep falls,
And loftier ones arise.
He rules supreme o'er earthly things,—
The great, the glorious, the sublime;
The august dome, the throne of kings,
All own their conqueror, Time.

He stills the forum and the mart,
He fills a thousand sculptured urns;
And they, as ages roll, depart,
And dust to dust returns.
And genius, with thy pallid brow,
Thy haughty lip, and eye of fire,
Old Time shall conquer even thou,
The pencil and the lyre.

And o'er those grand ancestral piles,
Where ivy evergreen is spread;
And through those dark and solemn aisles,
Where sleep the mighty dead;
And o'er the proud triumphal arch,
Where erst victorious chiefs were crowned,
He passes, in his silent march,
And hurls them to the ground.

Well, let his ivy banners wave
O'er palace dome and castle tower;
And let him trample on the grave,
Exultant in his power:
There is a realm beyond the tomb,
A purer clime, a fairer shore,
Where death comes not to blight the bloom,
And Time shall be no more.

A WARNING.

Why art thou so fondly dreaming,
Simple little heart?
While with May-day sweetness teeming,
All thy blooms depart;
Thou in all thy girlish gladness,
Fond, and sweet, and pure;
Why wilt thou with fatal madness
Make destruction sure?

See! the serpent's eyes are gleaming;
Shouldst thou feel his dart,
Thou wilt mourn this idle dreaming,
Simple little heart.

Fair and bright is thine ideal,
Would his plumes might stay;
But thy lover is too real,
Thou wilt find him clay.
Stand aloof, thou sweet believer,
Do not nearer go,
Lest the breath of the deceiver
Stain thy robes of snow.
He is crafty, false, and scheming,
His the traitor's part;
Why of him so fondly dreaming,
Simple little heart?

Wheresoe'er his glance hath lighted,
It hath left a sting;
And like locust-plague, hath blighted
Every living thing.
I can see those dark eyes weaving
For thy soul a snare;
I would save that heart from grieving,—
Artless girl, beware!
Turn thee from their magic beaming,
Ere those rays impart
Woeful waking to thy dreaming,
Simple little heart.

Dost thou judge the heart's warm beating
By the lofty brow?
Then thy joy will be but fleeting:
Oh how blind art thou!
He hath lost each true emotion
Long ere thou wert born;
And that young heart's pure devotion
He would laugh to scorn.
All his goodness is but seeming,
All his truth but art;
Why of him so fondly dreaming,
Foolish little heart?

Oh, beware! ere life's gay morning
Close in dark despair;
Do not slight this earnest warning,—
Once again, beware!
There are hearts whose hopeless sighing
Prove his power too well;
Never till their hour of dying
May they break his spell.
See, he comes with courtly greeting;
Why so wildly start?
Hush, or he will hear thy beating,
Simple little heart.

THE GARLAND.

I SEND thee this garland, my dearest;
Though silent and cold thou mayst be,
I know thou wilt start when thou hearest
Whose hand hath entwined it for thee.
With tremulous fingers I fold it,
And kiss it again and again;
For I know that thine eyes will behold it,—
Those eyes I have sighed for in vain.
Then take it, beloved, to thy keeping,
And smile on it once ere it dies;
For see, it is wet with my weeping,
And breathes but the odor of sighs.

I send thee this garland, my dearest,
In memory of happier hours;
For I know that mine image is nearest,
When borne on the fragrance of flowers.
And know, though the cold world estranges
The friends thou hast known since we met,
Through sickness, and sorrow, and changes,
One bosom is true to thee yet.
And could I be sure that this token
One thrill of delight could impart,
That moment the cloud would be broken
That gathers so dark on my heart.

I send thee this garland, my dearest,
Yet fetter each bloom with a spell;
Thou canst cast it aside if thou fearest
The one who has loved thee so well.

And mark, though these blossoms may wither,
Like flowers that have bloomed in my heart,
The thoughts which their fragrance brings thither
Will never, no, never depart.
They will haunt thee wherever thou goest,
And bring to thy memory my sigh;
For well, my beloved, thou knowest
That none love thee better than I.

"FORGET ME NOT."

A SONG for thee, "Forget me not,"
Thou best beloved of all the flowers
That cluster in my garden plot,
Or deck my household bowers.
I think when on thy leaves I gaze,
Of lover's vows and poet's lays;
All thou hast been in other days,
Thou sweet "Forget me not."

Thou dost recall, "Forget me not,"
Things I have dreamed, or heard, or read;
Of quaint old legends long forgot,
That link thee with the dead.
By thee the lover urged his suit,
With thee the maiden wreathed her lute,—
Maid, lute, and lover, all are mute,
Not thou, "Forget me not."

When I look back, "Forget me not,"
Through mine own aisles of memory,
I smile, for every lovely spot
Is sweetly marked by thee.
The violet tells me of my dead;
Of passion's dream,—the rosebud red;
Of faith,—thou with thy bending head,
Thou pure "Forget me not."

Thy drooping bells, "Forget me not,"
Conceal the dew that in them lies;
As we conceal in memory's grot
Our tears from careless eyes.
The heart that beats in sympathy
Alone, our inmost motives see;
And reads aright my song to thee,
Thou dear "Forget me not."

LOVE'S LAURELS.

We gaze on genius in the poet's splendor,
The haughty lip, pale brow, and eye of fire,
And listen breathless to the gushings tender,
Poured in wild songs from his exultant lyre.
We dream not of the griefs that slumber under
That bright exterior, till some sudden start
Of bitter anguish tears the mask asunder;
And then the world beholds, with startled wonder,
The secrets of a wronged and breaking heart.

A nation's pride his laurel wreath is twining,
Yet little cares he for a world's acclaim;
We praise his genius. Ah, how few divining
The hopeless love that won his meed of fame!
He will be shrined with heroes, saints, and sages,
His thrilling songs the patriot's heart will move;
The minstrel lover long will seek his pages
With glowing cheek, and genius wear for ages
The laurel garland won by martyred love.

Look yonder on the painter's canvas, glowing
With woman's holiest beauty pure and bright;
Know ye the heart, with earthly love o'erflowing,
That gave that sweet Madonna to our sight?
And that fair form o'er Jordan's waves descending
On angel's wings, as old traditions say,
One morning o'er the painter's easel bending,
Such heavenly grace with earthly beauty blending,
Left there her form, and stole his heart away.

Behold yon statue, beautiful and real,
The youthful love of one whose race is run;
We call it now a glorious dream ideal,
And give to genius wreaths that love hath won.
We follow page by page of ancient story,
The records of the orator's renown;
The relics of Apostles wet and gory;
Near and afar on every field of glory,
We still find genius with love's laurel crown.

MY JEWELS.

I KEEP my jewels in this little box,
And always open it on bended knees;
What need have I to guard with bolts and locks,
For who would steal such simple things as these?
Here on the top my sister's picture lies,
That sister I beheld a month ago,
So sadly changed, I scarce could recognize
The blooming belle that had been worshipped so.

And there was one who loved me when a girl,
One who has won his crown by saintly deeds;
Here are his gifts,—a crucifix of pearl,
And little rosary of silver beads.
And here are leaves bound with a simple string,
And letters with a faded riband tied;
This was my father's watch-chain, and this ring
Was on my mother's finger when she died.

Here is a little book I dearly prize,
Though plainly bound, and tattered too, and old:
This book is far more precious to my eyes,
Than yon rich volume with its clasp of gold.
I turn its yellow leaves, grown dim with years,
And kiss the flowers between the pages placed;
And try to read again through blinding tears,
The margin notes a loved one's hand hath traced.

Here is a slender tress of golden hair,
A broken bridal ring—no matter whose—
A necklace clasp,—these are my jewels rare,
That for a world of wealth I would not lose.
The magic of a dear one's word, or look,
Hath round each trifling thing a halo cast;
Where is the woman's heart without some nook
Stored with its dear memorials of the past?

WAITING.

A WEEK ago to-day,
One week, and yet a month it seems;
How slowly it hath crept away,
Though laden with sweet dreams.
How slowly, in my quiet home
Waiting for steps that never come,
Listening for one dear voice in vain;
Well, I at last have known the pain
Of waiting.

It would not seem so long,
This week of weeks, but for one day
That, like a summer morning's song,
Passed joyously away;
And cast a smile upon life's stream,
And on my heart one golden beam,
Far brighter than the sun's bright ray.
'Tis for that smile my heart to-day
Is waiting.

Hushed is the lute's low tone;
Why should I sing? thou wilt not hear.
The power inspired by thee alone
Is lost,—thou art not near.
Well, let the lute enwreathed with flowers
Hang silent in my lonely bowers
Till thou restore its gentle art.
'Tis for that blissful hour my heart
Is waiting.

Thou knowest I love thee, dear;
Thou knowest, too, it had been best
That love had never entered here,
To bring this wild unrest.
Ah, better we had never met,
Yet not for worlds would I forget
One single link that forms my chain,
Nor miss thy smile to lose the pain
Of waiting.

AND THEN?

What is your plan of life? an old man said
To a young student standing by his side;
And the pale stripling raised his haughty head,
And to the aged questioner replied:

My plan of life is, first to win and wear
My college laurels; I commence to-day
To strive with might and main, that I may bear
The highest honors from its hall away;
My single talent I will turn to ten.
He paused. The old man only said,—And then?

Why, then I hope to win a warrior's fame,
And lead my country's armies to the fight;
And men shall hail me conqueror with acclaim,
And rush in thousands to my standard bright.
Or, with her statesmen I will take my seat,
And lead in council with unequalled skill;
Or sing her charms in strains divinely sweet,
Till every patriot heart shall proudly thrill.
Thus would I rule with all,—sword, lyre, and pen.
He paused. The old man only said,—And then?

Then I would win a fair and gentle bride,
And make her mistress of a palace home;
And kind and fond ones gather to my side,
To bless and cheer me when the shadows come.
And thus, a life of glory I would live,
A worthy scion of a noble line;
With all the happiness that earth can give,
Wealth, fame, and love, to brighten my decline,
Then die lamented by my fellow-men.
He paused. The old man only said,—And then?

And then,—what then? Love, glory, fortune, power,
Is all that earth to mortal man has given;
Nought else to bless him in his dying hour,
Nought else to ope for him the gates of heaven.
'Tis not enough, my Master; I resign
Earth's brightest gifts,—its fortune and renown,—
To be a lowly minister of thine,
And give my life to win a heavenly crown.
I'll tell God's mercy to my fellow-men
Till death shall come, and it will cheer me then.

MY ROSEBUD.

I LAY thee on my aching heart,
My rosebud, pale and dead;
A sweet memorial thou art
Of her whose life is fled.
They brought thee here, fair folded flower,
Like babe for christening drest;
That thou mightst bloom for one short hour
Upon my baby's breast,
Fair rose,
My baby's sinless breast.

Thou mightst have had a brighter fate,
O bud of fragrant bloom,
Than on my heart, so desolate,
To waste thy rich perfume.

But thou, with all thy matchless grace,
Could find no place of rest
More holy, in the world's wide space,
Than on my baby's breast,
Sweet rose,
My baby's sinless breast.

Thou mightst have bloomed for minstrel's lyre,
Or lady's bridal bower;
Or drooped, perchance, 'neath passion's fire,
A scorned and worthless flower;
Or breathed unprized thy latest sigh,
By careless fingers prest.
Ah! was it not more sweet to die
Upon my baby's breast,
Dear rose,
My baby's sinless breast?

DEATH.

No more I shrink from thee,
Nor wildly quiver at thy breath;
For bright and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!
My sinless babe is on thy bosom laid,
And thou hast closed her azure eyes in sleep
So lovingly; why should I be afraid,
Or wherefore should I weep?

Once did I shrink from thee,
And wildly quiver at thy icy breath;
Now, bright and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!

Oft hast thou sought my home,
To take the infant from my loving breast:
O mercy's messenger, when wilt thou come
To give the mother rest?
This world is but a waste of tears and sighs,
And I am weary, weak, and tempest tost:
O bear me to the kingdom of the skies,
Where dwell my loved and lost.
I will not shrink from thee,
Nor quiver when I feel thy icy breath;
For fair and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!

Yet, can I leave the earth
So gladly, willingly, with thee alone?
Leave, dark and desolate, the household hearth,
And he, the sorrowing one?
Leave the young children, who around me yet
Cling like spring blossoms to a withered stem?
How could I in my selfish grief forget
And turn away from them?
Alas! I am not free,
The world still binds me with affection's breath;
Though bright and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!

The nurslings sweet and fair,
Whom thou hast taken to their blissful home,
Need not a mother's tender watchful care,—
To them no harm can come.
And their baptismal robes, all pure and white,
From touch of earth thy snowy wings shall hide;
While mine, all stained with sin and passion blight,
Must yet be purified.
Then let me bend the knee,
Nor tempt kind heaven with my complaining breath;
Though bright and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!

Now will I rise, and make
My garments clean, and on the hilltop set
My little taper, for the dear ones' sake
Whom God hath left me yet.
Let me, a pilgrim, tread life's devious ways,
And learn to keep my sandals free from dust;
Mine eye turned steady, through the shadowy maze,
To Him in whom I trust,
And calmly wait for thee,
Till thou art sent to loose the struggling breath;
For bright and beautiful art thou to me,
O white-robed angel, Death!

FAREWELL.

I MAY not listen longer
To the language of my heart;
If this passion dream grows stronger,
'Twill be almost death to part.
So, this moment I will sever
That fatal clasp of thine,
And hereafter, and forever,
Bring love to duty's shrine.

I'll shun that dark eye's glancing,
Call me fickle if thou wilt;
But, in all my wild romancing,
I have never dreamed of guilt.
I twined this fond affection,
Like a garland, round my heart;
But for my soul's protection,
Beloved, we must part.

Beloved, did I call thee?
Yes; teach that heart of thine
That whatever ills befall thee
Brings agony to mine.
In grief, my heart will quiver
With a sympathetic thrill;
And though we part forever,
I lose, yet love thee still.

FORGOTTEN.

How calmly thou didst take my hand,
That hand so cold and tremulous;
And I could in thy presence stand,
And know thou didst forget me thus.
Yet we were friends in early years,
And bound by many a fervent vow:
Well may this page be wet with tears,
To think we meet as strangers now.

For thy dear sake I took the lyre,
And strove to find the master key,
That I might sing those songs of fire
My soul had treasured up for thee.
And lo! to-day we meet by chance,—
I with heart thrilling to the core,
Thou, with thy calm, unchanging glance,
As if we ne'er had met before.
Yet we were friends in early years,
And bound by many a fervent vow:
Well may this page be wet with tears,
To think we meet as strangers now.

Well, be it so,—perhaps 'tis best;
'Tis only one dead friendship more
Henceforth to slumber in my breast
With many that have gone before.

But one,—one more, and yet I weep
That I could thus forgotten be;
To know thou dost not even keep
One memory of my love for thee.
Yet we were friends in early years,
And bound by many a fervent vow:
Well may this page be wet with tears,
To think we meet as strangers now.

BOOKS.

Yes, there they lie, with golden treasures teeming,
Those books, the works of poet, prophet, sage;
While I have spent my leisure hours in dreaming
Of those whose names are on the title page.
For every name brings up its own heart history:
The poet writes it with a burning pen,
The seer records it in the shadowy mystery,
The sage in warnings to his fellow men.
But all, yes all, tell of the toil and sorrowing,
The thorns that sprung along their earthly track;
Their only hopes from the far future borrowing,
Their sad regretfulness in looking back.

And far away, beyond the earthly real,
On skylark wings the minstrel pours his strain:
Finding no Eden like the bright ideal,
With dreams he peoples Paradise again.

Jehovah, looking down on silent waters,
Was mirrored like the Adam of his mind.
'Twas not as portraiture of earthly daughters
That Eve, the pure and glorious, was enshrined.
The minstrel's Eden, fair and ever vernal,
Was not a likeness of this world of ours;
But earth, fresh from the hands of the Eternal,
Was like the poet's Paradise of flowers.

God was not then the unknown, far-off spirit
That Faith beholds Him, through the vista dim;
And man from sinless Adam doth inherit
The power to love, but not converse with Him.
And 'tis this love that makes so bright and glorious
The bard's ideal of Jehovah's face;
The trust in Him o'er sin and death victorious,
That crowns the picture of triumphant grace.
And yet through all the soul of pain is showering
Its blood and tears along his earthly track;
And thoughts of human passions overpowering,
Make his regretfulness in looking back.

O seer and sage! what hath thy deathless pages
Of inner life that poet hath not known?
Where are the caverns of departed ages
That have not echoed to the minstrel's tone?
What hints the prophet of the things mysterious
That grand old kingly bards have not foretold?
What writes the sage of wisdom gay or serious
That hath not fallen from the harps of old?

O suffering bard! the world may rank thee lowly,
As through the thorny ways thou'lt struggle on;
Sage, seer, and minstrel, with a mission holy,
The image of the Godhead, three in one.

THE OLD LYRE.

O SPIRIT-BREATHING lyre,
Thou hast been silent long:
Come, light the waning fire,
And sing the olden song.
Unbind thy wreaths of willow,
Twine flowers around the wire,
And seek the dear one's pillow,
O spirit-breathing lyre.

Go tell them of the bliss
That wakes thy numbers now,
And steal with gentle kiss
To lip, and cheek, and brow.
Heed not the stern reproving,
Nor angry words of ire,
But sing the joys of loving,
O spirit-breathing lyre.

Sing, sing, they will not think
My spells are round them cast;
Sing, sing, while link by link
I bind them to the past.

But if a tear of sorrow
  Should dim those eyes of fire,
Speak of a happier morrow,
  O spirit-breathing lyre.

THE NEW YEAR'S VALENTINE.

In blooming boyhood comes the glad young year,
  The stripling scion of a princely line;
And with a voice like clarion, sweet and clear,
  Sings to the fair young Spring his valentine.
He was a nursling babe but yesterday,
  Fresh from the arms of his white-headed sire;
To-day he comes in manhood's trappings gay,
Crowned with bright hopes, at beauty's feet to lay
  His tribute of the lyre.

And he will conquer. When had lady fair
  A braver knight to wield the sword or lance?
None reins the charger with a statelier air,
  Or hath more power of magic in his glance.
A kingly crown is on his noble brow,—
  His costly regal robes with diamonds shine;
In courtly phrase he breathes the lover's vow,
And he is master of the lyre; and now
  He sings his valentine.

"O queen of beauty! I have loved thee long,
And proved thy fame at tournament and tilt;
Have sung for thee the fond impassioned song,
And dyed my sword in red blood to the hilt,
And brought for thee the gemmed tiara, sweet,
And priceless jewels from the richest mine.
Then cast one look upon me when we meet,—
Thy lover's heart lies bleeding 'neath thy feet:
O be my valentine!"

And when did youth and beauty plead in vain?
The world is now as in the olden time:
Love hath been heard and will be heard again,
In spite of warning voice or minstrel rhyme.
He will be happy in the smiles of Spring,
If fond affection yieldeth happiness.
O love and sorrow, ye are twins, and cling
To faithful souls. Alas! that love should wring
The heart it longs to bless.

Soon will his first love slumber with the dead,
And he will win the Summer to his side;
She, too, in turn, will droop her stately head,
And leave the rich, ripe Autumn for his bride.
And when old Winter decks his crispy hair
With drifting snow, he'll turn, in life's decline,
When tottering down the hillside bleak and bare,
To see upon the summit, fresh and fair,
His boyhood's valentine.

A-MAYING.

Thou comest with thy sunshine clear,
To chase the April glooms away:
Of all the months that make the year,
Thou art the loveliest, gentle May.
Thy sweet white blooms, like strings of pearls,
Are wove in bands of shining hair;
As merry groups of laughing girls
From woodland glades their treasures bear.
My heart hath been a Maying too,
In cool, green valleys far away;
These are not tears, but drops of dew,
Shook from dead blossoms, gentle May.

I may not join the sportive round
Of dances 'neath the flower-wreathed tree:
By other hands thy queens are crowned,
And others twine thy wreaths for thee.
The thrilling voices now are stilled
That chanted once thy choral strain,
And eyes that thy soft sunshine filled,
May never ope on earth again.
And yet my heart goes Maying too,
But not among the glad and gay;
For thoughts those bright ones never knew,
Have made thee holy, gentle May.

I rise no more before the sun,
To bathe my brow in dew or stream;
I seek no more, when day is done,
The four-leaved clover for my dream.
Not all the power of stream or dew,
Not all the dreams on midnight's track,
Could light my clouded brow anew,
Or bring the faith of girlhood back.
Yet still my heart a Maying goes
To lonely valleys far away,
Where willows bend and cypress grows,
And graves are garlanded by May.

AVE MARIA!

AGAIN 'tis near the vesper hour:
A holy stillness haunts the air.
The sweet-toned bell in yonder tower
Will quickly sound the call to prayer.
Thine eyes are dim with sorrow's rain,
And paler grows thy weary face;
Yet sing, beloved, the vesper strain,—
Ave Maria, full of grace,
Ave Maria!

This vesper peal, 'neath other skies,
Will reach the crowd in field and mart;
And knees will bend, and prayers arise,
Like breathings of one mighty heart.

The vintage fails, the leaves are bare,
And ruin marks the favored place;
Yet sounds the chime, half song, half prayer,—
Ave Maria, full of grace,
Ave Maria!

We know there is a distant shrine,
Where gleams the sacred taper's light.
By the blue waters of the Rhine,
A weary pilgrim kneels to-night.
We know his lamp of life burns dim:
Soon death shall end his troubled race.
Come, sing the vesper strain for him,—
Ave Maria, full of grace,
Ave Maria!

Each heart hath its own secret pain,
Its love, or sorrow, or despair;
We look in human eyes in vain
For sympathy; it is not there.
But o'er our souls the vespers steal,
Till human sorrows lose their trace;
Then sing, sad hearts, the sacred peal,—
Ave Maria, full of grace,
Ave Maria!

THE SONG OF AGES.

They call thee dreamer, O thou soul,
Who leaves afar the thoughtless throng,
To hear the ages, as they roll,
Proclaim to earth their prophet song.
What carest thou for wreath of fame,
Poor worm, whose God with thorns was crowned?
Let all creation praise His name,
While yet the earth rolls round.

Man wakes to greet the sun at morn,
And sinks again to rest at night:
Type of his life,—thus he is born,
Lives his short day, and fades from sight.
A million hearts that yesterday
Beat frantic at life's narrow bound,
Are silent now; life passed away,—
And still the earth rolls round.

Death meets the babe in infant play,
And man amid the toils of life;
The blooming bride, the grandsire gray,
Leave side by side the scenes of strife.
The sailor on the sinking mast,
The soldier on the battle-ground,
Marshalled by death, fly swiftly past,—
And yet the earth rolls round.

The waving grain is seen to-day
Where once was spread the ocean waves,
And sportive billows dash their spray
Above our father's hallowed graves.
And on our Western prairies now,
Lie buried arts in many a mound.
How came they there? We know not how;
Yet still the earth rolls round.

The world hath seen heroic deeds,—
Kings bound, and slaves with fetters riven;
Proud tyrants crushed like slender reeds,
And glory's crown to shepherds given.
Hath seen old empires pass away,
New worlds of wondrous beauty formed;
They too in turn may meet decay,
While still the earth rolls round.

Since first the Maker's mandate came,
And eyes of clay beheld the light,
Historic records only name
Once, when the earth delayed its flight:
Once,—not when our Redeemer died,
Though heaven was hushed in awe profound;
The Son of God was crucified,
And yet the earth rolled round.

Can man behold the heavens at night,
Where myriad stars in glory shine,
And yet deny the centre light,
Round which they move by laws divine?

Vain is man's power. Can science say
When the archangel's trump shall sound?
Age after age may pass away,
And still the earth roll round.

TO ——.

Thou canst not now recall thy wasted years,
Thy splendid talents suffered to decay;
As well thy cheek, grown pale with frequent tears,
May seek the freshness of its April day.
The past is past, the future, far away,
Is what the present makes it. Be thou wise,
And Mercy may yet shed her gentle ray
On thy dark soul, and lead thee to the skies.
Thou art not wholly lost. The feeble flame
That warms thy bosom to repentance now,
May yet redeem thy deeply sullied name,
And wipe the earth-stain from thy manly brow.
Be wise: the time that yet remains for thee,
May win a glorious immortality.

KNOW THYSELF!

On the temple of the sages,
It was traced in words of gold;
And the wise, for many ages,
Learned and taught that motto old.

We have teachers, school and college,
All endowed with talent rare;
But the science of self-knowledge,
Is not known or studied there.

O my masters, learned and gifted,
Here is surely something wrong.
Chide not if the light be lifted
By a simple child of song.

I have cause to bless the science
That hath saved me from despair,
Brought me strength and self-reliance,
And a will to do and dare.

I, a dreamer, prone to wander
From a world of toil and strife,
Find myself a brave commander
On the battle-field of life.

Through my veins the rich blood courses,
And my limbs grow firm and strong
As I marshal out my forces
From the camps that held them long.

Ye who read my words with railing,
Wait and see my army grand;
Hope, will, energies unfailing,
Are the soldiers I command.

And no more I listless wander,
Shrinking far from toil and strife;
I am now a brave commander
On the battle-field of life.

THE FORSAKEN.

Her hair is twined in glossy braids,
And wreathed with fragrant flowers;
Yet from her face the sunlight fades,
As pass the weary hours.
But still she seeks the misty pane,
To watch the fading light,
And wait for him, but all in vain,—
He will not come to-night.

The light hath faded from the sky,
The stars come one by one;
Yet, with a sad and wistful eye,
The girl keeps watching on;
Yet often turns to brush away
The tears that dim her sight;
And 'tis so sad to hear her say,
"He will not come to-night."

She calls to mind his parting words,
And breathes them o'er and o'er;
But now they fall on quivering chords,
That never thrilled before.

She pushes back the braided hair,
Her cheek is ashy-white;
But 'tis the paleness of despair,—
He will not come to-night.

Well, many a cheek of brighter red
Hath lost its rosy glow;
And many a fairer, prouder head,
Hath bent in anguish low,
And tears have flowed, sad, bitter tears,
From eyes as dark and bright,
And many a passing angel hears,
"He will not come to-night."

A CHRISTMAS CALL.

Oh my beloved, return
Once more to bless the lonely hearth,
To watch the Christmas taper burn,
And wake the voice of mirth.
Oh come, thou hast been absent long,
And silent is the laugh and song;
Come, my beloved, it cannot be
A merry Christmas without thee:
Oh best beloved, return!

Come with thy cheerful smile,—
I never called for thee in vain;
Come, drive the shadows hence awhile
That brood on heart and brain.

Come, let me look upon thy face,
And feel once more thy fond embrace.
By all the woes which round me fall,
I pray thee answer to my call,—
Oh best beloved, return!

Come, come! What though I stand
Beside the bending Christmas tree,
The centre of my household band,
My soul still yearns for thee.
For thee; and are my longings vain,
And wilt thou never come again,
To take thy place at board or hearth,
And join thy voice in prayer or mirth?
Oh best beloved, return!

Come, let thy dear hands press
Once more in blessing on my head;
And in thy voice of tenderness
Be Christmas greetings said.
I call in vain. To many a home
An answer to this call will come,
But not to mine. Oh spirit fled,
They call the living, I the dead,—
Thou wilt no more return.

THE EARLY DEAD.

Thy voice is hushed, whose gladsome strain
Was heard the summer long;
We will not hear thy tones again,
In morn or even song.
Nor quiet home nor festive hall
Will echo back thy tread;
Nor fond word answer loving call,
For thou art with the dead.

There was a harp of joyous tone
That wakened for thy sake,
But now it breathes a shuddering moan,
As if its chords would break.
The soul of song its music bore
Is with thy spirit fled;
Hushed is its mirth forevermore,
For thou art with the dead.

There was an eye that brighter grew,
Whene'er thy step was heard;
A cheek that glowed with richer hue,
E'en at thy lightest word;
And sweetest roses culled and brought
To crown a radiant head;
But now the roses bloom unsought,
For thou art with the dead.

The minstrel throws the wild harp down :
It hath no music now;
The maiden twines a cypress crown
To deck her fading brow.
And brightest eyes have wept for thee,
And fondest hearts have bled,
And sad and wild the dirge shall be,
For thou art with the dead.

THE LUTE.

O TELL me not of poet's lays,
I ask no wreath of fame;
I would but win one voice of praise,
One lip to speak my name.
Let others seek the victor's meed,
And deathless garlands twine;
More welcome were the humblest weed
From one dear hand for mine.
The poet's lays, and words of praise,
How worthless would they be,
If I should seek one loving gaze,
And it were turned from me.

O tell me not of glittering gold,
'Tis not for wealth I pine;
My heart were stored with wealth untold,
If one dear smile were mine.

I'd teach my lute the softest lays,
And wake its deepest thrill,
And from those spirit-dazzling rays
Win inspiration still.
But if that heart I may not share,
One mournful dirge I'll pour,
Then hush my lute in mute despair,
And touch its chords no more.

Let those who wake the lofty lyre,
The gifted and the great,
To higher, prouder themes aspire,
And tempt a brighter fate.
And let them be with garlands crowned,
Let banners o'er them wave,
Make them in monumental ground
A nation-honored grave;
But do not chide the simple lute,—
More humble is its lot;
And when its low, deep tones are mute,
It soon will be forgot.

THE AGED.

Speak not to me so harshly. I am bending
Beneath the weight of fourscore weary years.
'Tis time my troubled life should have an ending;
Why should I linger in this vale of tears?

The loved ones of my youth have gone before me,
Some in their summer, some in autumn's glow;
I mourn their loss when wintry storms pass o'er me,
And weary of my pilgrimage below.

Nay, follow not my steps with heartless scorning,
Mark not with mocking laugh my feeble tread;
Ye in the bloom of youth, in life's young morning,
Have ye no reverence for the hoary head?
Why would ye make my way more sad and dreary?
Spare me my staff to bear my steps along.
Ah! who can wonder that the aged weary
Of life, 'mid sorrow, bitterness, and wrong?

'Tis summer time, and all around are smiling,
And flowers and waters dance in joyous glee;
And age is but a word for gay reviling,
A cumbrance to the earth, a withered tree.
No birds sing in its boughs, no fond affections
Their tendrils twine around its naked form.
'Tis but a mark for olden recollections,
Bare to the noonday sun and midnight storm.

Well, let me rest in peace; I am but biding
The grave to call me from a world of care;
In its still bosom all my sorrows hiding,
No heartless scorn will break my slumbers there.
I sorrowed when my early friends departed
As one who had no hope. I did not know
That I should live till, old and broken-hearted,
I wearied of my pilgrimage below.

ALL SOULS.

"It is a belief of the Irish peasantry that the souls of the departed, on the eve of All Souls, revisit the friends and places they loved while on earth."

On my couch one midnight lying,
Thinking of the dead and dying,
And the weary farce of living,
When life's blessed hopes are o'er,
Suddenly there came a sighing,
Like a kindred heart replying,
Or a soul sad answer giving,
From the far-off spirit-shore.

Then a shuddering awe came o'er me,
And a voiceless terror bore me,
Like a bark borne by a billow,
On a stormy midnight deep;
Till, with sudden courage arming,
"What," I thought, "is here alarming?"
So I turned upon my pillow,
Closed my eyes, and tried to sleep.

But my hopes were unavailing.
Soon there came again that wailing,
And I cried, "Oh God, what is it
That can give such fancies birth?"
Then with sudden thought I started,—
"'Tis the night when the departed
Leave the realm of souls, to visit
Friends and places loved on earth."

Thinking of this superstition,
Lo! there came a quick transition,
And there stole a calmness o'er me,
As I lay upon my bed;
"Why," I thought, "should this alarm me?
Those who love me will not harm me,
And the shades that pass before me
Are the spirits of my dead."

Then a strain came, light and airy.
"That," I thought, "is little Mary."
And straightway I fell to weeping
For the little two-year-old,
For the tender April blossom
That was taken from my bosom,
And beneath the sod is sleeping,
In the churchyard drear and cold.

That wild wail could be no other
Than the stormy-passioned brother,
Who was fated to inherit
Temper fearful as the blast.
He the wild and wayward ever,
Scorning every fond endeavor
To subdue the fiery spirit,
That led on to death at last.

Sad and solemn came another.
That, I knew, must be the mother,
That we laid beneath the willow,
Near the sculptured marble stone.

Is her gentle spirit grieving
For the daughter unbelieving,
That across my midnight pillow
Thus she pours the piteous moan?

Then I wept in deep contrition,—
Call it idle superstition,
What you choose, all you who hear me
Tell of these mysterious things.
But I know that spirits loving
Were around my chamber moving,
And the sound I heard so near me
Was the rustle of their wings.

THE POETS.

God's ministers are they,
Between the heaven and earth alone they stand;
Here souls are captive, held by bonds of clay,
There, stretching far and beautiful away,
Is the free spirit-land.
And they unto the weary world shall bring
Glad tidings of deliverance, and sing
Of the dear Christ that suffered for its sake.
Woe, if they sleep while souls are left to die;
Woe, if they cease to sound that warning cry,
The Master comes, awake!

God's ministers are they,
Forever bringing hidden truths to light,
And sending brilliant gleamings of the day,
By white-robed messengers, in bright array,
Across the solemn night.
Theirs is the power, by magic touch, to bear
Far from the earth its weary load of care,
Lest tender hearts should break;
And by their hands the fearful bolts are hurled,
And thunders roll. Why sleepest thou, old world?
The Master comes, awake!

God's ministers are they,
Catching the music from that distant shore
Far soothing. When earth's stricken children lay,
The loved and beautiful, in death away,
They whisper evermore;
Not of the pale, cold form, the lost, the dead,
But the bright glory of the spirit fled;
The burning thirst that living waters slake.
They tell of the archangel, that will bring
To ears of clay the summons of the King,—
The Master comes, awake!

GRACE.

Thou art mine angel, well I know
Thy spirit hath not fled,
Though many a weary year ago
I laid thee with the dead.

I twined the violets in thy hair,
And strewed them o'er thy bier;
But death could touch not soul so fair:
Thou art mine angel, dear.

I trembled when I named thee, Grace,
And saw thine holy eyes
Turned, sad and earnest, to my face,
With meanings strange and wise.
And thus my soul beholds thee now,
When sin or wrong is near;
Closed are thy cloudless eyes, but thou
Art still mine angel, dear.

I think the infant at my heart
Hath oft a look like thine,
And tremble lest she too depart,
And scarce dare call her mine.
I clasp her closely to my breast
With earthly love and fear;
But thou, in thy bright home of rest,
Art still mine angel, dear.

KINDRED SOULS.

Hast thou ne'er met from stranger eyes
An earnest, pitying look,
And read a soul without disguise,
As in an open book?

And felt the knowledge cheer thee,
That whatsoe'er thy lot,
A kindred soul was near thee,
Though thou hadst known it not?
No spoken word may reach thee, no accent thrill the air,
Yet thy perceptions teach thee a sister soul is there.

Hast thou not known amid the crowd
A deep thought strangely thrown,
As if a soul had breathed aloud
In answer to thine own;
And often wildly started,
As if the dead were near,
When tones like those departed
Fell on thy trembling ear?
A spirit voice thou hearest, in that remembered tone,
Say, "I am near thee, dearest, thou art not all alone."

Hast thou not heard a voice repeat
A long-forgotten strain,
And felt thy heart's returning beat
To happiness again;
Or heard a sad lyre singing
Of sorrow like to thine,
With mournful pathos clinging
To every soul-breathed line?
Thy loved in death are lying, but tones thou'lt ever hear,
In answer to thy sighing, "I too have sorrowed, dear."

THE AWAKENING.

Why sleepest thou,
O lyre of ancient story?
Come from the mouldering ashes of the past;
There dawneth now
For thee a day of glory,—
A youthful nation calls thee forth at last.

Awake! awake!
From thy unworthy slumbers,
And like the Phœnix from its funeral pyre,
Let thy soul shake
The loathsome dust that cumbers,
And spring to fresher life, immortal lyre.

Bare is the bough
That bore the leaves that crowned thee,
When in ancestral halls thy strains were poured;
But freedom now
Twines fairer wreaths around thee,—
Thou art no more the vassal of the sword.

Shake from thy strings
The manacles of ages,
And pure and free pour forth thy soul of fire;
We, too, have kings,
And heroes, saints, and sages,—
Sing to our sons of them, heroic lyre.

Why shouldst thou sleep?
Here is the mighty river,
Broad lake, and lofty mountain, stern and grand;
Mines vast and deep,
And woods that moan and quiver
With unrecorded legends of our land.

And thou hast caught,
From minstrels old and hoary,
And prophet bards, a charm for every wire;
And war hath brought
Its wild appeal for glory;
And canst thou slumber still, ungrateful lyre?

THE LOST HEART.

Lost! lost! that thou art lost to me,
It needs not words to tell!
Is this the meeting that should be,
For such a fond farewell?
I shrink to meet thy altered face,
Thy brow, so stern and cold;
Thou hast for me no fond embrace,
As in the days of old.

I can remember happy hours
Beneath a forest tree,
Where thou hast woven wreaths of flowers,
And told sweet tales to me.

These wreaths are for another's brow,
Thy tales to others told;
Alas! thou dost not love me now,
As in the days of old.

Another's name hath filled the heart
Where mine was wont to be,
Another's smile, with magic art,
Hath won thy smile from me.
Thine arms around another's form
Are clasped in loving fold;
Ah! can that clasp be pure and warm,
As in the days of old?

Lost! lost! and yet no word of mine
Will seek to win thee back;
No smile from me will ever shine
Across thine altered track.
Why should I seek to keep a heart
That may be bought and sold?
Go, go! it is not grief to part,
As in the days of old.

ANGELS.

Are there no angels but in yon blue heaven,
No blessed, holy ones to light the earth?
Are there no Eden flowers that God hath given,
To bud and blossom at the household hearth?

What are those gentle ones, whose radiant faces
Steal to our lonely homes like sunbeams bright?
Who twine around our hearts in fond embraces,
And bless the roughest paths, the darkest places,
With bloom and light.

What are they, they whose spotless lives unfolding,
Disclose the pure and stainless soul within?
Who pass along, their heavenly birthright holding,
Fair and unsullied, through a world of sin.
Are they not angels, blessed angels, given
To deck with bloom and beauty earth's dark sod,
And form those tender links that, still unriven,
Go with the spirit to its native heaven,
To live in God?

Go to the hearthstone where young forms are bending,
Where folded infant hands are raised in prayer;
List to those earnest tones to heaven ascending,
And tell me, are not angels kneeling there?
Where is the heart so seared by sin and sorrow,
That is not softened by their gentle power?
Where is the fainting faith that may not borrow
A blest assurance of a brighter morrow
In trouble's hour?

Who hath not sought the couch where babes were sleeping,
To gaze upon the brow so pure and fair?
To kiss the blooming cheek unstained by weeping,
And twine the fingers through the golden hair?

And apt to wonder, 'mid the soft caressing,
Why forms so fair should have a mortal birth;
Why lips so pure as those that we are pressing,
Should ever need a prayer or ask a blessing
From those of earth.

THE LYRE.

Ring out, sweet lyre, a soothing strain,
A sacred anthem, low and deep,
Till writhing hearts grow calm again,
And aching eyes forget to weep.
Sing of the loved who mourn no more,
Sing of the lost whom God hath found,
Sing of the bright eternal shore,
Till souls shall triumph at the sound
That rings along the magic wire,
O gentle, sweet, consoling lyre!

Sing for the brave a merry march,
Returning from the battle-plain,
Those who, with flowers and bannered arch,
We welcome to our homes again.
Ring with the bells a joyous peal,
With gladness greet them when they come;
Let not one tone of sorrow steal
Across the soldier's "welcome home."
Ring out, and let thy strains inspire
A worthy greeting, gentle lyre!

Sing for the brave who sleep afar,
With laurelled brows all pale and cold,
Wrapt in our flag, with every star
Still shining on its azure fold.
Let not the strains be sad and low,
But thrilling with exultant pride,
Till eyes shall flash and cheeks shall glow,
And hearts shall envy those who died
For our loved Union. Wreath each wire
With their green garlands, lofty lyre.

Sing of our country, proudest still
Of all the nations of the earth;
Her banner waves on tower and hill,
And every clime proclaims her worth.
Let "Hail Columbia" hush the cry
Of jealous feuds; and ne'er forget
Her sons can for her glory die,
Her daughters praise and bless her yet;
And strike with patriotic fire
Thy slender strings, heroic lyre!

QUESTIONS.

Do you believe that ever bard
Sang like a bird when it was raining?
I frankly own it is too hard
A triumph for my weak attaining.

If I would sing a merry strain,
It must be when the sun is shining.
You've heard of bards who liked the rain,
And talked of clouds with silver lining!
It wasn't me.

Do you believe the child of rhyme
Walks easily the path of duty?
Or, could he choose, would waste much time
Upon the question, "Brains or Beauty?"
He would be handsome and beloved,
In spite of genius and the muses;
Though this assertion be not proved,
If any one belief refuses,
It isn't me.

Do you believe the sons of song
Are skilled in worldly, smooth-tongued lying?
Then I believe you judge them wrong,—
They have the gift of plain replying.
They do not call misfortune sin,
Like some I know in higher places.
If others think a post to win,
They show a head with many faces.
It isn't me.

Do you believe that bards are born
With lack of conscience? No, sir, never!
Though weakness bring them oft to scorn,
They keep the true perception ever.

When beauty lends its fatal ray,
To lure them from the pure ideal,
If any wonder that they stray,
To worship God's divinely real,
It isn't me.

Of all men born, the sons of song
Shall answer least for wilful sinning;
Though wealth may have temptations strong,
They are not lucky in its winning.
They love the fair, the pure, the gay,
Sing ever when the sun is shining;
Who blames them if a rainy day
May give them reason for repining?
Not me.

TO ———.

So thou hast laid thy lute away,
And hushed thy thrilling strain,
And when I question, lightly say,
Thou wilt not sing again;
For wherefore shall thy song prevail,
To charm the thoughtless throng,
When love proves false and friendships fail,
And *these* thy themes of song?

O sweet-voiced singer, thou shalt learn
'Tis useless to complain
Of love that meets with no return,
Of friendships false and vain.
Thou yet shalt lift thy soul above
Each petty grief and wrong,
Nor give to faithless human love
The power to hush thy song.

Oft but to see thee blush and start,
I breathed the name so dear,
Then sighed to think that gentle heart
Had pain and sorrow near.
The hour hath come; cast off thy dream,—
Thou hast been bound too long;
The world hath many a loftier theme
Than this to wake thy song.

Sing, minstrel, sing; put not away
Thy lute, nor hush thy strain;
For many a bard before to-day
Hath won his power from pain;
And many a lute hath learned to move
At will the proud and strong,
While sleepeth in the grave the love
That woke its first sweet song.

POESY.

Up with the dawn-light and spread thy bright pinions,
  Bird of the dream-land, what fetters thee now?
Where is the king that had broader dominions?
  Where is the bird that is freer than thou?
See, I have opened thy cage with the morning,
Bidding thee speed from the world's bitter scorning!
Go, my beloved, while the glory is dawning,
  Up to the throne where the white angels bow.

What though thou leavest me hopeless and lonely,
  Stripping my pathway of blossom and song?
Who, for the sake of the myrtle sprays only,
  Dares to condemn thee to sorrow and wrong?
Go from my bosom, thy earth-ties are riven,
Go to the spirit-bowers whence thou wert given,
Mingle thy music with sweet harps of heaven,—
  There and there only thy praises belong.

Spirit-bird fly, I will never recall thee,—
  High was thy mission and happy thy birth;
Dark days have come, and lest evil befall thee,
  Haste to the blissful realm far from the earth.
It is not meet that an earth-child so lowly,
Treading life's pilgrimage sadly and slowly,
Thus should be blest. O spirit-bird holy!
  Fly where no sorrow shall sadden thy mirth.

THE SPIRIT-LAND.

"All paintings and statues and poems are but shadows drawn out of the ideal land. Looking through the symbol, we enter into the same spirit-realm."

NAY, tell me not the home of spirits
Is but a poet's dream of air,
Or that the seer alone inherits
The power to win an entrance there.
The keys that ope those glorious portals
Through which eternal music rolls,
Are ready for the hands of mortals
Who pine to view the land of souls.

The busy crowd, the irksome duty,
The records of departing time,
Wake not the shadow-land of beauty,
Where poets wreathe the immortal rhyme.
The pure and fervent aspirations
That breathe in words sublime and grand,
The gifted painter's soul-creations,
Give entrance to the spirit-land.

A music-strain of fervent feeling,
A spirit's yearnings, pure and fond,
Swing back those golden gates, revealing
The secrets of the world beyond.
For grand conceptions first were given
Before the earth from chaos sprung,
And music-tones were heard in heaven
Before the sons of Adam sung.

Then tell me not the home of spirits
Is but a poet's dream of air,
Or that the seer alone inherits
The power to win an entrance there.
It is not so, for through all ages
To genius did those gifts belong,
And portals closed against the sages
Were open to the sons of song.

RENE MARGUERITE.

Thy place was not in garden bowers
When first we met, Rene Marguerite,
But 'mid the sweetest woodland flowers
Thy purple blooms first met my sight;
Thou wert a blossom sweet and mild,
And I a happy, artless child:
Ah! well for me no second sight
Foresaw this meeting of to-night,
Rene Marguerite.

From western hills I saw the sun
His dying arms around thee fold,
And leave thee, as he placed upon
Thy stately head the crown of gold.
And then I thought of many a queen
Thus lover-crowned as thou hast been,
As lightly won, cast off as light
As thou wilt be, thou child of night,
Rene Marguerite.

I know thou sittest on the throne
Where once the Lily sat a queen,
And thou dost claim the bower thine own
Where truth and purity have been;
And thou dost lift thy guilty head
Where sleeps our lily with the dead:
Sweet lily, all in robes of white,
Not like the queen who reigns to-night,
Rene Marguerite.

Were it the passion rosebud red
That took my regal lily's place,
Whose fervent tenderness had spread
Around her fall a blush of grace,
I would not chide; but thou, so cold,
'Twas not for love that thou hast sold
Thy virgin soul. Go from my sight!
I love thee not, thou child of night,
Rene Marguerite.

I do not think my lover meant
The lesson thou wert doomed to bear,
Or knew thy language, when he sent
Thy purple blossoms for my hair,
Or thought how oft 'round woman's name
Thou blendest with the wreath of fame.
Thou type of sorrow, sin, and blight,
I love thee not. Go from my sight,
Rene Marguerite!

ONE WORD.

One word is breathed in a lover's ear,
And his doubts and fears are past;
He had loved and waited many a year,
And here is the fruit at last.
Well may the speaker, young and fair,
Thrill like a frightened bird:
She has given her hope to another's care,
By that little simple word.

One word, to the slanderer's ear it came,
And nothing on earth could save
That gentle girl that with sullied fame
Was sent to an early grave.
Nothing was wrong in that thoughtless breath,
If only the good had heard,
But slander was near, and shame and death
Followed that careless word.

One word, and a mourner bent with woe
Lifted her drooping head:
What could there be in that murmur low,
Giving her hope for the dead?
Her grief was too deep for tears, but now
The fountain of tears is stirred,
And hope comes back to the heart and brow,
By the power of that little word.

Alas! for the thoughtless words we speak,
For the sin of the passing breath;
For the gentle hearts we may wound or break,
For the souls we may lead to death.
How seldom we think that each word we say,
By an angel host is heard;
And we may not know till the judgment day,
The fruit of the lightest word.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

Go, take thy wreath; 'tis not for thee
That I have toiled, O Fame!
No laurel braid may ever be
A garland for my name.
A voice that with affection's art
Hath learned to praise or blame,
Is dearer to my woman's heart
Than all thy wreaths, O Fame!

Oh why should I on chord or wire
My soul's wild music pour,
Or twine with flowers the minstrel lyre
Culled from my heart's deep core?
Why ope the secrets of that heart,
To win a world's acclaim?
And feel my very life-strings start
For thy frail meed, O Fame!

And wealth, what would its treasures be,
Its stores of gems or gold,
If one dear smile was lost to me,
One heart grown stern or cold?
O little would I prize the power
That other hearts could move,
And deem my gift a worthless dower,
Could it not win me love!

Alas, alas, for woman's heart,
That lyre of many strings!
If one weak chord be torn apart,
A thousand closer clings,
And pour their treasures from within,
In music wild and free!
What wealth or fame could never win,
Is won, O Love, by thee.

THE EVENING STAR.

O GENTLE evening star!
Now softly gleaming in the twilight sky,
I know that one afar
Now turns to thee his sadly thoughtful eye.

He knows that thou art now
Shining o'er his loved valley, calm and fair,
Lighting his young wife's brow,
Or gleaming on his infant's golden hair.

And I would love thee less,
O star of evening, beauteous as thou art,
Hadst thou not power to bless,
And bring sweet memories to that wanderer's heart!

His is a kindred soul,
With lofty purposes and yearnings high;
O soothe with sweet control
His weary spirit, watcher of the sky!

All the deep shades of woe,
And the wild agonies that I have known,
Must that fond dreamer know,
Ere the bright visions from his soul have flown.

O gentle evening star!
Nor thou nor I can lead that soul above,
Till seared with many a scar,
And torn with sorrows be the heart I love.

I, too, must watch and wait,
Powerless to help as thou, O pitying star!
Till, overcome by fate,
His soul forgets to beat its prison bar.

Then, star of evening, shed
Thy soft beams on him; and, his struggles past,
May Love on his dear head
Pour the bright rays of righteousness at last.

LINES.

Well, what art thou to me, that I should listen
To hear thy voice? why should I think of thee,
Or turn my eyes where oft the tear-drops glisten,
To seek thy name? what is that name to me?
Why shouldst thou haunt me ever in my dreaming,
And weave thy witchery round each waking hour?
Have those dark eyes, with all their gentle seeming,
Some hidden charm, some fatal mystic power?

Ah! what art thou to me? is my heart leaving
Its olden shrine to make a God of thee?
Is thy proud hand the flowery fetters weaving
To bind my heart, till now so wildly free?
Is it thy recklessness that hath endeared thee,
Or the strange splendor of that massive brow?
I sometimes wonder that I ever feared thee,
Yet I have greatest cause to fear thee now.

When thou wert angry, scornful, and defiant,
My heart was safe, I feared thee then so much;
But now my heart, no longer self-reliant,
Thrills like a lute-string to thy lightest touch.
This dream may pass away, no danger bringing
To thy proud soul, so silent and so strong;
Not thus to me, whose love is ever flinging
Its secrets on the passion tide of song.

If I were wiser, I perhaps would tremble
Thus to unveil my thoughts to careless eyes;
But when I learn the lesson to dissemble,
Will I be happier, though I be more wise?
Wouldst thou be truer? wouldst thou love me better?
Alas, how dare I hope for truth from thee!
Well may I look with wonder on each fetter
Thy hand hath wreathed, for what art thou to me?

THE OLD SANCTUM.

I AM once again in the sanctum old,
Quaint, and narrow, and dim,
But not a spot doth the wide world hold
More dear, for it speaks of him;
Not the stranger face
That I faintly trace
Through the gloom in the easy chair,
For he sleepeth low
That long ago
Was throned as a monarch there.

And now through the twilight's deepening gloom
Cometh a gentle throng,
And every nook in that shadowy room
Hideth a spirit of song.

And the stranger there
In his easy chair
Bendeth his thoughtful brow;
Do the spirits haunt
The occupant
Of that dear old sanctum now?

Here was the first rose-laurel braid
Twined for my simple lute;
Brighter garlands may bloom and fade,
Lips that I prize be mute;
But dearer far
To the rustic star
Than fame, or beauty, or gold,
Is the simple band
That a loved one's hand
Twined in that sanctum old.

THE MEETING.

Near the casement low I am leaning now,
With the sunset glow on my fading brow;
And I write these lines
'Neath the clustering vines,
Where long ago I heard thy vow.
But time brings change,
And cold and strange,

We met to-day in the crowded street;
In the olden time,
When our love was rhyme,
It was not thus we were wont to meet.

To life's fair spring with its wildwood flowers
How the heart will cling in its lonely hours;
And listen still
For the joyous thrill
Of the birds that sang in its vernal bowers!
But the shadows close
In dull, plain prose,
And hushed is the song that was once so sweet:
In the olden time,
When our love was rhyme,
We could not have dreamed that we thus should meet.

THIS, TOO, MUST PASS AWAY.

"And so the old Baron gave a grand banquet, and in the midst of the festivities, he requested the seer to write some inscription on the wall in memory of the occasion. The seer wrote, 'This, too, must pass away.'"—OLD STORY.

ONCE in a banquet hall,
'Mid mirth and music, wine, and garlands gay,
These words were written on the garnished wall,—
"This, too, must pass away."

And eyes that sparkled when the wine was poured,
'Mid song, and jest, and merry minstrel lay,
Turned sad and thoughtful from the festive board,
To read, 'mid pendant banner, lyre, and sword,—
"This, too, must pass away."

And where are they to-night,
The gay retainers of that festive hall?
Like blooming rose, like waxen taper's light,
They have departed, all.
Long since the banners crumbled into dust,
The proud Corinthian pillars met decay,
The lyre was broken and the sword is rust,
The kingly bards who sang of love and trust,
They, too, have passed away.

Yet Genius seeks the crown,
And Art builds stately homes for wealth and pride,
And Love beside the household shrine kneels down,
And dust is deified.
Yet midst our loves, ambitions, pleasures, all,
The spirit struggles ever with the clay;
On every ear a warning voice will fall,
Each eye beholds the writing on the wall,—
"This, too, must pass away."

THE MEETING.

Few years have passed since last we parted,
With vows of love no time should change,
Both young and gay and hopeful-hearted,—
Dreamed we of meeting cold and strange?
Yet so it is; the links that bound us
A scornful world hath rent apart,
And we have learned, from those around us,
To veil the feelings of the heart.
We both have changed.

How we had smiled with bitter scorning,
In life's young, trusting, truthful May,
If we had heard in words of warning,
A meeting such as ours to-day;
But now we turn aside, disdaining
The hope that made our spring-time bright;
We wake no more at morn complaining,
Nor breathe each other's name at night,
For we are changed.

There is a rosebud of thy giving
Laid on my heart; what doth it there,
All withered, dead, while roses living
Are blooming round me fresh and fair?
What though 'twas nourished by my weeping,
And kissed and smiled on o'er and o'er;
See, now I cast it from my keeping!
The withered rose is prized no more,
For thou art changed.

Yet O, 'twere better that this meeting
Had never been. What shall I do?
How can I still my heart's wild beating,
And live and smile, and thou untrue?
In vain I turn from recollection,
In vain I call on pride and will;
The memory of this old affection
Is twined with every heartstring still,
Though thou art changed.

Away with all the pomp and glitter
Of wealth and fame! I ask it not.
It cannot make my tears less bitter,
Nor light with smiles my darkened lot.
Alas, alas! 'tis vain denying
How wildly, madly I adore.
Though hopeless, yet with truth undying,
'Twill haunt my path forever more,
Though thou art changed.

THE SLEEPING CHILD.

It slumbered on its mother's breast,
An infant, innocent and fair.
The sun, just sinking in the west,
In glory bathed its golden hair;
The wind had left the deep blue sea,
And flown through forests dark and wild,
That it might toss in sportive glee,
The ringlets of the sleeping child.

The tinted lids were softly closed,
So softly that the lash of jet
Scarce on the blooming cheek reposed,
Or veiled the azure eye; and yet,
So thin the lids that trembled over
Those beaming eyes of heavenly blue,
We almost thought we could discover
A gleam of radiance shining through.
The lips were red as roses are,
The brow a lily's dazzling white:
We deemed the child a fallen star,
Or seraph from the realms of light,
So pure and holy did it seem
In slumber soft; and when it smiled,
O who could wonder wind and beam
Had strayed to kiss the sleeping child!
And on the mother's bosom laid
A pretty, tiny, dimpled hand,
As smooth as if 'twas only made
To clasp a fairy's flowery wand..
And calm the little bosom rose,
Nor fears disturbed its gentle rest,
As if its summer life might close
Upon a mother's loving breast.
We could not think that bloom would fade,
That heart be torn by passions wild,
But bowed the sinful head and prayed
God's blessing on the sleeping child.

AT LAST.

Why art thou sighing? Thou wert once so gay,
But now a shadow o'er thy brow is cast.
Nay, turn not thus thy tearful eyes away,—
I know it all: that heart hath bloomed at last.
Have I not traced thee through the lonely bowers,
And watched thy tears, and heard thy mournful tone,
And saw thee bending o'er the autumn flowers,
Whose lives were fading emblems of thine own?
And I have wept for thee as, day by day,
I saw thy sorrow wear thy bloom away.

Thine is the autumn bloom. Thy spring hath flown,
Thy joyous fragrant summer fleeted by,
And now the mystic charm is round thee thrown.
Ah me! that thou shouldst blossom but to die.
Is there no balm for thee? Hath time no balm
To heal thy wounded heart, and bid thee live?
Ah no! thou leanest on an earthly arm,
To find that rest that only heaven can give.
Look up, pale flower, thy life-tide floweth fast,
And God will be a hope for thee at last.

Dark are the shadows hovering o'er thy track,
Yet I, of all thy friends, those shadows see.
They think that spring will bring thy roses back,
But well I know no spring will bloom for thee.

In silent agony I watch thee fade,
Like a pale floweret in the wintry blast;
Yet, loved and cherished one, though lost, betrayed,
My heart shall give thee shelter to the last.
Thou wert the first that woke affection's thrill;
Thou art the last,—I love thee, prize thee still.

How we have wandered, many a happy day,
Through the green valleys round our early home,
Ere gayer friends had won our thoughts away
With flattering tales, and lured thy heart to roam.
Dost thou remember, dear one? dost thou weep
To gaze upon this picture of the past?
Would it were all that memory had to keep!
O would to God I could forget the last!
Yet it is vain these sad complaints to pour,—
Hope, health and peace will come to thee no more.

And art thou grieved? Back to my heart I press
These torturing memories of days gone by.
Nay, turn not coldly from my warm caress,—
Thou hast no friend that loves thee more than I.
Gladly this moment would I offer up
My brightest hopes, even life itself, for thee;
To pour the tide of sorrow from thy cup,
And make thee now as thou wert wont to be.
Alas! nor love nor prayer hath power to save:
Thou hast no hope, no refuge but the grave.

FAREWELL.

Go to the world, the world that longs to meet thee,
And let the laurel round thy brow be twined;
Clasp thou the friendly hands that turn to greet thee,
And think no more of those thou leav'st behind.
What though one loving heart for thee is pining,
What though one couch with nightly tears be wet,
The graceful form upon thine arm reclining,
The host of brilliant stars around thee shining,
Will teach thee worldly wisdom,—to forget.

Go to the world, young beaming eyes will glisten
Whene'er thine accents fall upon the ear;
And I may vainly hush my heart to listen
For one fond word from lips to me so dear.
Thou wilt forget me. Would I, too, might sever
Each tender link that binds my heart to thee!
Would I could think of thee in friendship,—never!
I once have loved, and I must love forever,—
Time cannot bring forgetfulness to me.

Once more, but once, to that fond bosom press me,
Once let me nestle in thy warm embrace;
Now dry those trembling tears, and smile and bless me,
For nevermore shall I behold thy face.
No, nevermore. My summer dream is over,
The sunshine of my life is with the past;
And though my watchful care thou'lt not discover,
Still will my spirit ever round thee hover,
And pray for thee, and love thee till the last.

Farewell! But when the world is dark before thee,
And time obscures thy spirit's brighter rays,
Then will the memory of my love steal o'er thee,
And thou wilt weep to think of earlier days.
And even on the darkly rolling billow,
Still wilt thou know my love hath no decline;
Though fairer hands may smooth thy dying pillow,
And strew thy grave, and o'er thee plant the willow,
Yet not a heart will break for thee save mine.

TO ——.

No more fond meetings ever,
No more sweet songs or flowers.
Alas! that fate should sever
Two hearts as true as ours!
That dreams so fondly cherished,
That hopes so gladly bright,
Should, like the flowers, have perished
Beneath an early blight!

No more bright beams of feeling,
In many a gentle lay,
That came to me revealing
What lips might fear to say;
That mingled with my dreaming
A soft, low melody,
Till heart and soul were teeming
With holy love for thee.

My head is sadly bending
  Above a magic scroll,
And mind with mind is blending,
  And soul communes with soul.
I trace the gems enwreathing
  Each word and thought of thine;
I hear the heart's deep breathing,
  And know that heart is mine.

Take thou this parting token,
  My heart's last gift to thee,
And though its links are broken,
  Still let them treasured be;
Nor longer vainly grieving
  The blight that o'er it fell,
But trusting and believing,
  I whisper thee, Farewell!

GARLANDS FOR THE LYRE.

Songs of pleasure, minstrel, sing,
  Merry strains of joy and gladness;
Why forever touch the string
  To the tones of grief and sadness?
Wreathe thy lyre with violets blue,
  From the valleys of thy spring;
Touch its gentle chords anew,—
  Sing of pleasure, minstrel, sing!

Have the violets of thy youth
  Faded from thy household bowers?
There are fairer blooms, forsooth,
  Than the blue-eyed April flowers.
Pure white blossoms of the May
  Round thy graceful lyre shall cling.
Throw thy willow wreaths away,—
  Sing of lilies, minstrel, sing!

O forgive! and be these bands
  From thy sight forever hid.
I forgot the little hands,
  Folded 'neath the coffin lid,
Clasping lilies pure and white.
  There, across the quivering string,
Let me wreathe the roses bright:
  Of the roses, minstrel, sing!

Were the garlands just like these,
  That around thy lyre were bound,
Whose dead leaves, on bended knees,
  Thou didst gather from the ground,
His last gift? I did not know
  Roses thus thy heart could wring.
Cease that strain of bitterest woe,—
  Of the laurel, minstrel, sing!

Let the laurel chaplet shed
  Its renown on brow and lyre,
It hath kept a kingly head
  Sacred from the bolts of fire.

It may shield a weary heart
From the harsh world's cruel sting.
Touch thy lyre with happiest art,—
Sing of glory, minstrel, sing!

VIOLETS.

Go, take those violets from my sight!
They call to mind my earliest hours.
I would be gay and glad to-night,—
Why dost thou bring those mournful flowers?
Nay, do not linger; couldst thou know
How much of grief were with them twined,
Thou wouldst not thus recall my woe,
And memory's bleeding wounds unbind.

Go, take thy flowers! Their sisters grow
Where chill and dark the cypress waves;
Some sleep in little hands of snow,
And some still bloom on little graves.
For there were human blossoms fair,
That I in anguish laid to rest,
With violets in their golden hair,
And violets on the silent breast.

Go, go! Let others choose those flowers
That I so oft baptized with tears,
But bring no more, in festive hours,
Memorials sad of other years.

Alas! those flowers have power to wring
My woman's heart with wild regrets.
Let those who love me never bring,
As gifts to me, blue violets.

PRAYER TO DEATH.

O COME not near her, gloomy Death!
She is the last of all the flowers
That came, with bloom and fragrant breath,
To bless this humble home of ours.
Have we not yielded up to thee
The fairest on the household tree,
The first born and the last?
And even now our heartstrings ache,
As if the chords would almost break,
In memory of the past..
What wonder that we dread thy breath,
So sadly blighting, gloomy Death!

How often, in the silent night,
I leave my sleepless couch to gaze
Upon that forehead, pure and white,
Beneath the moon's soft mournful rays;
And wonder if thy step is near,
And bend my softly listening ear
To catch her breathing low;
And if too slow, or if too fast,
My arms are round her madly cast,
In bitter, speechless woe;

And when I catch my quivering breath,
I can but pray, O spare her, Death!

Woe to the wretched mother, woe,
Who offers at an earthly shrine!
Who dares to yield to aught below,
Such wild idolatry as mine;
Who knows the sin, yet raises still
Her voice against the Master's will,
In accents strange and wild!
And when she bends the knee to pray,
In broken words can only say,
O Father, spare my child!
And in the same deep, quivering breath,
Breathe this wild prayer to gloomy Death!

THY DAY IS CLOSED.

Thy day is closed! O, joy to thee,
Great heart and spirit high!
Blest is the lance that set thee free,
Without a lingering sigh.
Death is a thing of dread,
To sinful souls like mine.
Rejoice, O spirit fled!
'Tis victory to thine.

Not the sad wail of anguish strong,
Thy funeral chant should be;
A song of joy, a conqueror's song,
Is far more meet for thee.
What though the bolt was sped
Without a warning sign;
We know, O sainted dead!
God's holy will was thine.

We lay aside the honored sword
Thy hand will grasp no more:
O, dauntless soldier of the Lord!
Thy victories are o'er.
Around thy noble head
The stars of glory shine:
Rejoice, O spirit fled!
We know that heaven is thine.

NINON.

I LOVED thee once; ah, woe the day
That voice had power my heart to thrill!
I loved thee once; oh, could I say
That I have ceased to love thee still!
It may not be; this tell-tale leaf
With love's regretful tear-drops wet,
These burning words of frantic grief,
So plainly prove I love thee yet.

I know not whence the mystic spell
That thus subdues my scornful heart;
For I have learned, alas! too well,
How weak, and vain, and false thou art.
I watch thee come with joyful thrill,
I see thee go with deep regret;
I know that thou art worthless; still
I cannot help but love thee yet.

Go from my sight, in mercy go!
With all thy fatal charms, depart!
This strife is burning, sure but slow,
The very life-blood from my heart.
I hail the jest, and wake the strain,
In my wild efforts to forget;
But laugh and song alike are vain,—
I cannot help but love thee yet.

TRUE LOVE.

Thou wilt never forget me, never,
Though far may thy footsteps stray;
Thou wilt love me as well as ever,
When seasons have passed away.
The hopes of thy youth may vanish,
Thy heart may be filled with care;
Nor time nor sorrow may banish
The form that is cherished there.

Thou mayst study the lore of sages,
And bow thee at wisdom's shrine;
Thou mayst bend o'er the poet's pages,
Till the fire of the soul is thine;
Thou mayst dwell in the halls of pleasure,
And smile with the young and fair;
But still will thy fond heart treasure
The name that is written there.

Wherever on earth thou goest,
Mine image will still be near,
And voices the sweetest and lowest
Will whisper my name to thine ear.
For thou canst not forget me—never;
For e'en in the arms of death
My name on thy lips shall quiver,
And die with thy latest breath.

THE CONSUMPTIVE.

'Tis o'er! ah, yes, the dream is o'er!
We know that thou must die.
Though lips and cheek but bloom the more,
And brighter is thine eye;
Though sweeter is thine own dear smile,
Thy voice more soft and low,
We gaze on thee, and weep the while,
To think that thou must go.

Why have we loved thee—worshipped thee,
Thou child of mortal birth!
Alas! alas! could we not see
Thou wert not for the earth?
Too good, too fair, to linger long.
O, bitter is our woe!
To love thee with a love so strong,
And know that thou must go.

As stars amid surrounding night
But shine with brighter ray,
So brighter shines thy spirit's light
Above thy form's decay.
In vain have all our efforts proved
To keep thee here below;
So good, so beautiful, so loved,
'Tis hard that thou must go.

COMPETENCE.

I WOULD not grovel in the dust
With toil and care; no joy to bless,
Nor yet great riches claim, and trust
To them alone for happiness.
I would have time to wake the lyre
To loftier strains, with spirit free
To mount the clouds. O vain desire!
This blissful mean is not for me.

One hour's repose from weary thought,
Save in my sleep, I may not claim;
And I have learned to hold as nought
My early brilliant dreams of fame.
I never knew in my sad life
A childhood's mirth, a girlhood's glee.
Vain are my dreams. O world of strife,
Thou hast no quiet nook for me!

No place of rest! Hush! hush! a voice
Speaks like a trumpet in my breast,—
"Come, I will make the sad rejoice,
And I will give the weary rest."
Again I lift my drooping head,
Once more my step is firm and free.
I was mistaken when I said,
The world had nought of peace for me.

PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY.

Pray for our country, pray,
That her trials may soon be past;
That the dawn of a brighter day
May rise to our sight at last;
That the troubles that threaten now
May pass like a cloud away:
Child with the stainless brow,
Pray for our country, pray.

Souls that are precious may die,
Innocent blood be spilt,—
Leave it to Him on high,
Whose is the cause, the guilt;
Turn from the giddy whirl,
From the sports of the young and gay,
Gentle and beautiful girl,
And pray for our country, pray.

Thou from whose home and heart
Husband and son have gone,
Steal from the crowd apart,
Kneel by the hearth alone.
God will avenge each life
Lost in the battle fray.
Mourning mother and wife,
Pray for our country, pray.

Pray for our country, pray,
Thou in thy manhood's prime,
Sire with the locks of gray,
Bard of the thrilling rhyme,
That the evils that threaten now,
May pass like a cloud away,—
Friends, let us humbly bow,
And pray for our country, pray.

COMMUNION WITH THE DEAD.

Thou bendest o'er me, sweet,
Thy holy fingers close my weary eyes.
I did not know that we again should meet
Beneath the azure skies.
My soul was waiting for that time of grace,
Waiting so patiently, O golden head!
Come to my heart and take thine olden place,
Lift to my fevered lips thine angel face,—
Thus do I hold communion with my dead.

I know the morn will break,
And thy sweet presence I no more shall see,
Yet shall my steps be holy for the sake
Of moments spent with thee.
Thy snowy wings from the eternal shore
Have heavenly benedictions o'er me shed,
And on my heart thy rays celestial pour,
Holiest and best! My lips shall say no more,—
Earth cannot hold communion with the dead.

Thy tender pleadings, sweet,
It must have been that won this power divine,
To bend thy pinions earthward, where thy feet
Have roved ere now with mine.
To touch mine eyes with chrism of holy light,
And wave thy fragrant censer round my head,
To draw the clayey curtains from my sight,
And stand before me beautiful and bright,—
O joy, to hold communion with our dead!

Now shall I tread the earth
As if I touched it not, remembering thee.
I was a child of passion from my birth,
But thou hast set me free.
Now through the world's dark mazes can I go,
Safe and secure, by unseen spirits led,
Chanting the soul's hosannas soft and low.
What now to me is earthly care or woe,
Since I have held communion with my dead!

WHAT SHALL I SING FOR THEE?

WHAT shall I sing for thee?
Across the lyre my fingers stray,
While I am thinking what shall be
The subject of my lay.
Wouldst thou prefer a warlike strain,
With bugle blast and waving plume,
Where captive nations break the chain,
And tyrants meet their doom?
Speak! shall the minstrel wake for thee
The grand old strains of chivalry?

What shall I sing for thee?
A dirge for *our* immortal dead?
Or sing of lands across the sea,
Where ancient heroes bled?

Is there a charm in minster glooms,
Where sleep the titled and the brave?
Or wouldst thou leave the laurelled tombs
To seek a lowlier grave,
And o'er its green sod wake, with me,
The grand old anthem of the free?

What shall I sing for thee?
A strain of melting tenderness,—
Of young love's fond idolatry,
Or passion's wild caress?
Shall I the bridal garland twine,
Or seek the blooms in valleys hid,
Whose blue-eyed daughters sleep with mine
Beneath the coffin lid?
Speak! whatsoe'er thy choice may be,
My willing lyre shall wake for thee.

What shall I sing for thee?
Songs of a bright and happy home,
In whose charmed sphere of childish glee
The shadows cannot come;
Where holy angels, in disguise,
Fold their white pinions round the hearth,
And look with sinless infant eyes
Upon a sorrowing earth?
Ah! bow the head and bend the knee,
If I must sing this strain for thee.

What shall I sing for thee?
My leisure hour hath passed away,
While I was thinking what should be
The subject of my lay:
And thus mine idle life flows by,
Day after day, year after year,
With cloud and sunshine, smile and sigh,
And age is drawing near.
Alas! for me, that life should be
As aimless as this strain for thee!

NOT COMING YET.

Not coming yet! It cannot be,
O careless girl! that you forget.
The hour you named was surely three,—
'Tis four, and you not coming yet!
Perhaps you think my adverse fate
Hath taught me patiently to wait?
Not so, fair idler; one look more,
And then the time of grace is o'er.
Not coming yet!

And now I think, how all life long
I watched for those who never came.
Some lingered 'mid the world's gay throng,
And others sought the bowers of fame;

One caught the gleam of gold afar,
And one a newly risen star;
While I, with disappointment sore,
Kept still repeating o'er and o'er,
Not coming yet!

For Love I waited long, long hours,
In happy spring-time, fond and true:
Perhaps in pleasure's rosy bowers
He lost his way—I never knew;
But long I kept the garlands fair
That I had braided for his hair;
And long my trembling lips would say,
Impatiently, as oft to-day,
Not coming yet!

Then Friendship, with the tenderest art,
Sent loving words I could not doubt;
And I unlocked my secret heart,
And poured its hidden treasures out,
And wreathed the lyre, and filled the vase,
And smiled the shadows from my face;
And now the golden summer dies,
And what my heart hath learned to prize
Not coming yet!

Strange, that I never have to wait
For what I love not: dark despair,
With sorrow, envy, wrong, and hate,
Attend my footsteps everywhere.

Strange, that the friends I love and trust
Will write their promises in dust.
O would I never more might say
Of those I love, as oft to-day,
Not coming yet!

IDOLS.

THOU art rejoicing o'er thy bright-eyed boy,
His sweet caresses and his voice of mirth:
I am lamenting o'er a dream of joy,
A voice of gladness passed away from earth.
Like thee, I smoothed a little golden head,
That, pillowed on my breast, in slumber lay.
Where is it now? Ah! sleeping with the dead;
Shattered the vase—the spirit passed away—
Mine idol turned to clay.

There is a depth of love in thy dark eye,
When gazing on thy child, 'tis pain to see:
Tremble, beware, for nought beneath the sky
Should bind our hearts in such idolatry.
What though his fair young mother's form and face
In him thou seest, once again I say,
Thou shalt not give to him the highest place,
For God is jealous—teach thy heart to pray.
Thine idol is of clay.

Alas! the household altars, niches, shrines,
Where lambs for sacrifice are wreathed with flowers!
Alas! the hearts whose mad affection twines
Sharp crowns of anguish for the coming hours!
Alas! for us, who, thinking them our own,
Those bright young angels, shining o'er our way,
Fall down adoring: many a bitter moan
Shall we, for every act of worship, pay,
To idols made of clay.

MY FLOWERS.

I THINK of my flowers
That sleep beneath the sod,
That in my summer hours
I yielded up to God.
Your graves with violets shine,
'Neath bending grass half hid,
Whose daughters sleep with mine
Beneath the coffin lid.

I think of my flowers,
Pure, beautiful, and mild,
That brought baptismal showers
To hearts with passions wild;
That filled a lowly home
With joy and sinless glee:
O as good angels come,
You came, my flowers, to me!

I think of you, my flowers,
With joy, though tears may start,
When dark misfortune lowers
Upon my home and heart.
I thank His blessed name,
In breathings pure and deep,
That ere the dark days came
He closed your eyes in sleep.

I think of you, my flowers,
And triumph while I say,
In this dark home of ours
You opened to the day.
My heart will thankful be,
And swell in pæans high:
God's chosen ones are ye,
Mother of angels I.

THE BROKEN HEART.

How peacefully her head the pillow presses,
How fair her form in snowy robes arrayed;
One wavy curl of all those shining tresses,
So rich, so lifelike, on the forehead laid;
A quiet calm around the brow reposing,
As if the parting soul went forth in peace;
The sweet lips closed, as if they smiled in closing,
In joyous triumph at the soul's release.

Weep not for her, sad sire, though dark and lonely
Thy home must be without her tender smile;
Weep not for her, but oh, remember only
That ye are parted but a little while.
The summer flowers are culled, by those who love her,
To deck her grave: ere many summers shine,
The loving hands that strew the flowers above her,
May bring the sister flowers to strew on thine.

Grieve not for her, young sister, when at even
Thou'lt miss the form that slumbered by thy side;
Grieve not for her, there is a peaceful heaven,
Where sorrow may not reach the widowed bride.
Then smooth that anguished brow, and cease thy weeping,
'Tis sin to murmur when the loved depart.
Ye may not wake her from her quiet sleeping:
Earth hath no healing for a broken heart.

THE FALLING OF THE LEAVES.

The autumn days are here,
And the trees are brown and sere,
And I hear the sighs of sadness that a girlish bosom heaves;
And I mark the hectic bloom,
That is brightening for the tomb,
And I know her strength is waning with the falling of the leaves.

It is hard for one so fair,
Who hath never known a care,
Nor love that hath departed, nor friendship that deceives,
To leave this world so bright,
For the gloomy shades of night,
And to tread the shadowy valley 'mid the falling of the leaves.

Hushed is the sound of mirth,
As she shivers by the hearth,
In the cool and frosty morning, and the damp and chilly eves;
And she shudders at the knell
Of the schoolmate loved so well,—
For the young are falling round us like the falling of the leaves.

With the gentle art of love,
I would lead her thoughts above,
And bid her trust the Saviour when her tender bosom grieves;
But still with gasping breath,
She shrinks from gloomy Death,
While fast her tears are falling as the falling of the leaves.

O pray for her, kind hearts,
That peace, ere she departs,
May gently fall upon her: not Death alone bereaves.
O well may we despair,
If the innocent and fair,
Fall with a troubled spirit, with the falling of the leaves.

THE CHIMES.

THINKING of thee,
I stood beside the church of chimes,
Where thou didst often stand with me
Repeating olden rhymes;
And in the twilight sky afar
I saw the trembling vesper star
Grow dim—or was it seen through tears?—
When sudden on my startled ears
Sounded the chimes.

And then a legend old,
And then a quaint poetic gem
Came with the tones as forth they rolled,
And linked itself with them.
And now into my mind they bring
The edict of a tyrant king,
And now I think what hearts have thrilled
When from the towers for centuries stilled
Sounded the chimes.

And now that trembling tone
Of a romantic dreamer tells,
Who roved the wide world round alone
In search of magic bells.
How in a foreign port one day
Just at the point of death he lay,
When softly on his dying ears
His own loved bells, the lost for years,
Sounded the chimes.

How on the midnight sea,
And through old caverns vast and dim,
Mysterious bells rang clear and free
The Virgin's vesper hymn.
How they have roused with warning deep
The Roman victor from his sleep;
How oft amid the Alpine snows
Those bells have broke the death repose,
Sounding the chimes.

In fair Italia's bowers,
And on the olive hills of France;
Where flows the Rhine past ivied towers
And homes of old romance;
In sunny Spain and Ire's green isle,
And where old England's valleys smile,
No place where love or glory dwells
But hath some legend of the bells
Sounding the chimes.

THE SOUL'S IDEAL.

Why should I lightly turn away
From brighter eyes to gaze in thine?
No other heart would seek the ray
That is the light, the life of mine.

Why should I tremble when I meet
That glance, so thrilling, strange, and sweet?
'Tis not a look unknown:
I oft have seen those startling beams
Bend sadly o'er me in my dreams,
With yearnings like my own.

I hear thy voice. Why should I start?
Why should my slumbering sense awake?
Why should the life-stream swell my heart,
Until I fear its chords will break?
For I that voice have often heard,
Low murmuring, like a lonely bird,
When summer days are flown;
It lingers round me all day long,
And sings me many an idle song,
With cadence like my own.

Thou knowest the dreamings of my soul,
My strange, wild thoughts I breathe to thee
My spirit bows to thy control,
Nor yearns nor struggles to be free;
For I have found another life,
More full of bliss, with less of strife
Than passion ever gives;
For, shrined within an earthly form,
A being, breathing, fond, and warm,
My soul's ideal lives.

FLOWERS.

I GATHERED these flowers
In morning's bright hours,—
Like love-dreams of old came their odorous breath;
But now they are fading,
Nor tears nor upbraiding
Can bring back their freshness or keep them from death.
An old superstition,
That voiceless petition,
That softly I whispered while twining my braid;
But hope hath departed,
And sorrowful-hearted
I breathe their faint fragrance while watching them fade.

While listlessly dreaming,
The day god was teeming
His lava of fire on my blossoms of love;
And then they were lying
All wilted and dying,
No cool sod beneath them, no leaf-shade above.
What waste of sweet valleys,
With green shady alleys,
What numberless streams hath this bright earth of ours!
What warm hearts and loving
Are through the world roving,
That fain would have nourished and sheltered my flowers!

O snowy-leaved daughters!
Beside the clear waters,
In realms of the blest, ye will blossom ere long;
Forgetting in heaven
The ties that are riven,
The sinful old earth, with its sorrow and wrong.
But never, O never!
Death's angel may sever
Thy forms from the heart that was false to its trust.
Go, fair and pure-hearted!
My hopes have departed,
My dreamings are ended, my castles are dust.

CONSOLATION.

Come! let us burst the fetters that have bound us
To sorrow and regret;
We have a world of bloom and sunshine round us,
And much to live for yet.

What though we seek in vain the smiling faces,
That by the hearthstone shone;
Are there no household flowers to take their places,
We yet may call our own?

Why should we nurse our selfish grief, forgetting
Our brother's joy to share;
And the green sods of earth with tear-drops wetting,
As if our loved were there?

What though the love of spring-time hath departed,
And friendship wrought us ill;
The world hath fond ones, true and gentle-hearted,
To love and bless us still.

While one bright angel in the world above us,
Doth vigils o'er us keep;
While blooms one flower—while lives one heart to love us,
What cause have we to weep?

Come! let us burst the fetters that have bound us
To sorrow and regret;
We have a world of bloom and sunshine round us,
And much to live for yet.

NOW.

O, STRONG, victorious Now!
I feel thy power at last,
Free from each broken vow
That fills my wasted past;
And from the vain to-morrow,
With dauntless heart and brow,
And sanctified by sorrow,
I lift my standard,—Now!

A seer in wizard lore
Read bondsman's fate for me,
And useless, heretofore,
My efforts to be free;

But now the spell is broken,—
Friend, shall I tell thee how?
My soul hath learned and spoken
The talismanic Now!

Why waste one precious hour
Lamenting o'er the past?
Be all thy strength and power
Into the present cast.
O dreamer! thy salvation
Is action,—why allow
This mad procrastination?
Now, is thy watchword,—Now!

TO-MORROW.

I CANNOT write to-day;
The sunshine hath a dreamy spell
That woos me from my home away
To fragrant woodland dell;
And o'er my face, not over fair,
The breezes toss my tangled hair,
And bear the unbound leaves away,—
Well, well, I cannot write to-day,
I'll write to-morrow.

In vain, old saint and sage,
Ye look on me with mournful eyes,
While wisdom chides from many a page
Which on my table lies;

For what are teachers such as these
To light and sunshine, bloom and breeze?
I cannot think what I would say;
So bear with me, dear love, to-day,
I'll write to-morrow.

There hangs my rustic lyre,
With last year's faded roses bound;
Now, as I touch each quivering wire,
The dead leaves strew the ground,
And memory whispers, soft and low,
The love-dreams of the "long ago;"
Of tender hearts that now are clay,—
Well, let me dream of them to-day,
I'll write to-morrow.

Would I could find the spring
Described in legendary lore,
Where Love could wash his dusty wing,
And soar to heaven once more!
That fount that sparkled clear and bright
Before the Indian sachem's sight;
Would I could lie where he hath lain!
O, what a glad, triumphant strain
I'd sing to-morrow!

Dear woods and sunshine bright,
I love you, yet I seek in vain
An earthly shrine, where Faith may light
Her altar lamps again;

An earthly stream, on whose bright shore
My faded hopes may bloom once more,
While Genius breaks his bonds of clay,
And sings to heaven his sweetest lay;
And what the world calls dreams to-day
Be truths to-morrow.

A CHRISTMAS GREETING.

All hail the merry Christmas time!
When angels sang the Saviour's birth;
Wake, Christian hearts, the strain sublime,—
Glory to God and peace to earth!
Dim doth the sacred taper burn,
As daylight breaks in hut and hall:
With many a happy, bright return,
My faithful friends, I wish you all
A merry Christmas!

Those who the willow garlands wear,
Whose hearts are all too sad for mirth,
The angels' song may surely share,—
Glory to God and peace to earth!
Call not the dead, in anguish deep,
They may not answer to your call;
I, too, for lost ones sadly weep,
And know 'tis vain to hope for all
A merry Christmas!

But why should young and merry hearts
Be saddened by our selfish tears?
Should we not twine, with cheerful arts,
Sweet memories for their later years;
And with glad songs and garlands gay,
Make bright the home in hut and hall,
Resolving kindly that to-day
Shall be for our beloved ones all
A merry Christmas?

AN EXPLANATION.

Just as the spirit moves I write,
Not thinking who will praise or blame:
All are not guided by one light,
All bosoms do not beat the same.
Were I as stainless as the snow,
I would be dark in some one's sight:
Then all may know, in joy or woe,
Just as the spirit moves I write.

How can I let each idle voice
Decide my course or prompt my strain?
When one cries out, "Rejoice, rejoice!"
Another sighs, "Such mirth is vain."
One sorrows o'er the minstrel's fall,
One hails for me the dawning light.
Good friends, you are mistaken all:
Just as the spirit moves I write.

Some lift their hands in dumb amaze,
To hear a matron minstrel sing
The burning dreams of early days,
The gay romances of the spring.
Some think 'tis very wrong to fill
The fainting heart with visions bright:
I hear their weak objections,—still,
Just as the spirit moves, I write.

I cannot pass along unmoved,
Or trill a carol light and gay,
When something I have fondly loved
Hath faded from the earth away.
When fervent hopes and yearnings high
Go with the lost beyond my sight,
My thoughts are wanderers to the sky,
And as the spirit moves I write.

Then think it not the minstrel's art,
That gives the strain its graceful flow:
Fresh gushing from a fervent heart,
Comes every note of love or woe.
Impulsive feeling, earnest thought,
Sincere affection, wild delight,
Flow unregarded and unsought,
For as the spirit moves I write.

MY SINGING BIRD.

SEND back one strain, my bird with plumage bright,
My singing bird, that from my bower hath fled,
Soothe with one gladsome note my wintry night,
From yonder brilliant kingdom of the dead.
Thy bright wings were unfolded on my breast,
I taught the strain that marked thy upward track,—
Now to the mourner in the lonely nest,
Wilt thou not send one note of greeting back?

My restless heart hath stilled its passion beat,
That I, my bird, may catch thy lowest strain:
Hushed is thy matin music clear and sweet.
Shall I not hear those thrilling tones again?
While from the sands of God's eternal shore
Comes murmuring back the ever-sounding sea,
While stirs the shadowy valley evermore,
No strain of greeting comes, my bird, from thee.

How could I send my tender nestling forth,
When from my boughs the leaves and flowers were gone?
Better to trust the chill winds of the north,
Than wing thy way to summer worlds unknown.
Eye hath not seen nor ear of mortal heard
The joys or ills that hover o'er thy track.
Alas! how may I know thy fate, my bird?
Thou hast not sent one strain of greeting back.

It must be well with thee where'er thou art,—
Thy proud soul was not chained to earthly things.
Above the world I kept thy sinless heart,
Nor shook the wayside dust upon thy wings.
Send back one strain, my bird of plumage bright,
My singing bird, that from my bower hath fled,
Soothe with one joyous note my wintry night,
From yonder viewless kingdom of the dead.

MARY.

Why should I weep for thee, my child,
Weep on thy day of birth?
The sweetest angel that ever smiled
Down on a sorrowing earth.
Though I never again shall behold thy face,
Nor rock thee to sleep on my knee,
Thou wert taken by death from my fond embrace,
Yet why should I weep for thee?

Thou art done with passion and sin,
Sickness, sorrow, and pain,
And this stormy world, with its noisy din,
Will break not thy slumbers again.
Though never again shall my yearning breast
Leap to thy childish glee,
Yet, fairest and best, in thy home of rest,
Why should I weep for thee?

All day long my heart is cold
With sorrow's wintry rain,
And at night I steal to my couch to fold
Mine empty arms again;
And I hear the wind through the branches bare
Of the weeping willow tree,
In the home of graves; but thou art not there:
Then why should I weep for thee?

These are the words that I often say,
Thus do I reason and will;
But the sage may talk, and the Christian pray,
While the mother is weeping still.
Not for the world would I call thee back,
Or fetter the spirit free;
But the light has gone from my lonely track,
And still must I weep for thee.

NO ONE TO LOVE.

No one to love in this wide world of sorrow,
No tender bosom our fortunes to share,
No loving face from whose smile we may borrow
Soothing in sadness and hope in despair.
Pity the heart that doth silently languish,
Hiding its grief 'neath a summer day smile;
Mourn for the spirit that, proud in its anguish,
Sings while the bosom is writhing the while.

No one to love in this wide world around us,
Why should we care if we prosper or fail?
None will rejoice when the laurel hath crowned us,
None will lament when our glory wanes pale.
We are but wanderers o'er the earth roving,
No one will follow our footsteps with prayer,
No quiet home, with its true hearts and loving,
Waiteth our coming to shelter us there.

Oft will a laugh that is sweetest and lightest
Thrill with wild anguish our hearts to the core,
Oft will a glance that is kindest and brightest
'Mind us of those we shall never see more;
And when the garlands for beauty's adorning
Bear the loved blossoms of those who have fled,
Oft will affection, unmindful of scorning,
Turn from the living to weep for the dead.

THE DREAMS OF YOUTH.

They pass away with every breath
The cold world breathes upon the heart,
They wait not autumn hours for death
To bid their gentle bloom depart.
We see them fading one by one,
Young love, romance, and stainless truth,
And we lament, when all are gone,
The bright and sinless dreams of youth.

When hate, neglect, and wrong hath stung
Our souls to madness,—when the trust
That crowned our brows when we were young,
Is dead and trampled in the dust,—
When eyes we love turn cold away,
When hearts we prize but work us ruth,—
Then, only then, we learn to say,
How foolish were the dreams of youth!

Yet, brother, yet would we not give
All we have won to bring them back,
To bid our faith in friendship live,
And see love's smile upon our track?
What is the wisdom we have gained?
Wealth, fame, and knowledge, all, forsooth,
Were gladly lost, to keep unstained
The pure and tender dreams of youth.

THOUGHTS OF THEE.

Thou comest to me in blissful dreams,
The day-dreams of my summer hours,
In the low murmur of the streams,
And in the fragrant breath of flowers.
Thou'rt linked with all the lovely things
That make the earth so fair to me,
And every sound the wild wind brings,
Comes to my heart with thoughts of thee.

The sunshine were not half so bright,
But for a well-remembered smile,
That mingles with its radiant light,
And falls upon my heart the while.
The silver stars, the moon's pale beam,
Reflected in the silent sea,
Were not so loved but for the dream
That links them still with thoughts of thee.

I sit beneath the willow shade,
Beside the stream where first we met,
My head against the dark trunk laid
As long ago: canst thou forget?
'Twas there thy first fond vow was breathed,—
Our names are carved upon the tree.
That dear old tree, its boughs are wreathed
With gentle memories of thee.

MY SOLDIER COMES NO MORE.

Yes, many a heart is light to-day,
And bright is many a home,
And children dance along the way
The soldier heroes come;
And bands beneath the floral arch
The gladdest music pour;
While beats my heart a funeral march,—
My soldier comes no more.

One morn from him glad tidings came,
Joy to my heart they gave;
At night I read my hero's name
Amid the fallen brave.
I know not where he met the foe,
Nor where he sleeps in gore;
Enough of woe for me to know,
My soldier comes no more.

Now here they come, with heavy tramp,
And flags and pennons gay,
Who were his comrades in the camp,
His friends for many a day.
The music ceases as they pass
Before my cottage door;
The flags are lowered; they know, alas!
My soldier comes no more.

What care I for the seasons now?
The world has lost its light:
No spring can clothe my leafless bough,
No morn dispel my night.
No longer may I hopeful wait
For summer to restore:
My heart and home are desolate,—
My soldier comes no more.

SONG.

Thou wert the star of morning,
Clear, beautiful, and bright,
That ere my manhood's dawning,
Stole softly on my sight.
And 'tis the same old story,
Though laurels deck my brow:
Sick of the noontide glory,
I mourn the starlight now.
O, gentle star of morning,
I miss and mourn thee now!

I sought the April blossom,
The meek-eyed violet,
And in my weary bosom
Its sweetness lingers yet.
Though brighter blooms have won me,
Since boyhood's happy hours,
Again thy spell is on me,
Thou chosen of the flowers!
My meek-eyed April blossom,
My chosen of the flowers!

A wild bird, in my childhood,
Thrilled with its music strain,
And I must seek the wild-wood,
To hear its notes again.

Sweet tones and strains of gladness
Mine ear hath often heard;
But in mine hour of sadness,
I mourn for thee, my bird!
O, wild bird of my childhood,
My free and happy bird!

When comes the shadowy even,
Star of the morning bright!
Wilt thou not beam from heaven
With gentle vesper light?
Wilt thou not smile, my blossom,
When willowy leaves are stirred,
And thrill my dying bosom
With one sweet song, my bird?
O bless my shadowy even,
My star, my flower, my bird!

NOT LOST.

Lost, did they say! I never thought
That thou wert lost to me;
Through all the anguish death had brought,
From this my soul was free.
I saw the bright links torn apart
That formed affection's chain,
And knew, through all, my pure of heart,
That we should meet again.

Thou didst not fall as dead leaves fall
From autumn's sapless tree;
But thou wert borne to heaven in all
Thy youthful purity.
As gentle April blooms depart,
As stars of morning wane,
So faded thou, my pure of heart;
Yet we shall meet again!

Why should I sorrow? I believe,—
And I can work and wait.
O, God! could loving soul conceive
A sadder, gloomier fate,—
Could aught, with more consummate art,
Wring the fond breast with pain,
Than this,—to think, my pure of heart,
We could not meet again?

I will believe, though many years
May yet be left to me,
That in the end, through toil and tears,
My home shall be with thee;
Though sighs of sorrow oft may start,
And tears may fall like rain,
My beautiful, my pure of heart,
We yet shall meet again!

WE MAY NOT PART.

Who dares to say that we must sever
The links that bind us heart to heart;
We who have loved so fondly ever,
Nor had one wish, one thought to part;
We two, whose lives were sweetly blended,
When spring's young violets decked the brow?
The flowers are dead, the spring is ended,
And yet we cling the closer now.

We may not part! Though clouds of sorrow
Are gathering o'er our paths the while,
Still will we hope, while we may borrow
Endurance from each other's smile.
Though bitter blast and wintry weather
Combine to strip our fading bough,
The withered leaves will fall together,
For nought but death can part us now.

We may not part! How dark and lonely
The world would be to hearts like ours!
How could we live when strangers only
Were smiling in our household bowers?
Ah no, my love! no power may sever
That tender bond, that youthful vow;
But one in life, but one forever,
Not even death can part us now!

WE'LL MEET AGAIN TO-MORROW.

In early hours, when passion flowers
By wintry winds were blighted,
When pride and hate could separate
The hearts by love united;
Ah! then you cried, as from your side
I went in hapless sorrow,—
"Cheer up, sweet heart, we only part
To meet some happier morrow!"

In after-life, my love, my wife,
When age was stealing o'er me,
Far from your side, o'er waters wide,
A sad misfortune bore me;
Yet, soft and clear, these words of cheer
Stole o'er my darkest sorrow,—
"Bear up, sweet heart, we only part
To meet again to-morrow!"

And now, my dear, when death draws near,
Why should you shrink or quiver?
No shadowy bark, the saving ark
That waits me on the river.
Faith lights the way, then only say
You will not droop in sorrow;
In realms above, my faithful love,
We'll meet again to-morrow!

THINE OWN.

THINE own thou didst call me in earlier years,
And never was music as sweet as thy tone;
A world of affection gushed upward in tears,
As fondly I answered, "Forever thine own."
The hopes of our springtime have fleeted, but still
Our hearts are unchanged by the cares we have known,
And our bosoms still bound with a rapturous thrill,
As feeling still whispers, "Forever thine own."

Thine own when the glory of summer was thine,
Thine own when the summer had faded away,
And the sun of affection that lights thy decline,
Shines bright as it shone on thy happiest day.
Then sorrow no more, love, nor yield to despair;
Though troubles surround thee, thou art not alone:
One bosom is near thee to lighten thy care,
One fond voice to whisper, "Forever thine own."

JEALOUS LOVE.

WHY comest thou not? 'Tis eventide,
And I have looked for thee so long;
Why dost thou linger from my side,
To smile amid the thoughtless throng?

I deemed thine heart was all mine own,
That eye would beam for none but me;
And canst thou leave me thus alone,
When I have none to love but thee?

Why comest thou not? I fear to think
A fairer form thine eye may prize,
A happier heart than mine may drink
The glory of those beaming eyes.
And I may look for thee in vain,—
Thy form I ne'er again shall see.
The thought brings madness to my brain,
For I have none to love but thee.

It was the magic of thine eye
That woke the glorious breath of song,
That I might win one soul-breathed sigh
From lips that I have loved so long;
And though I fear the hope is vain,
Thy heart hath not a place for me,
Still wilt thou hear in every strain,
That I have none to love but thee.

DOLCE FAR NIENTE.

Yes, it is pleasant thus to weave the rhyme,
As the fit takes us, leaning idly back
In cushions soft, forgetting tide and time,
And all that they are leaving in their track.

This work-day world, with its continual din,
Its strife of tongues and homes of endless care,
Is not so happy as the world within,
With its blue skies, sweet flowers, and valleys fair,
And the soft breathing of its summer air,—
Dolce far niente.

And in this realm,—this calm, luxurious clime,—
Behold the drooping angel of Repose,
Round whom we wrap the graceful folds of rhyme,
And fan with zephyrs till her eyelids close;
And with light feet the Fancies trip along,
Hiding with flowing robes the passing hours,
And the fair spirit, Dream, with tenderest song,
Woos the rich odors from the beds of flowers,
And scatters in this Paradise of ours,—
Dolce far niente.

And so we sit and fold our empty hands,
And dream vain dreams, or weave the idle rhyme,
Forgetting the recording angel stands,
And we shall meet again our wasted time.
Alas for us! amid our groves of balm,
We oft forget the work, the praise, the prayer.
Well may we draw the curtain in alarm,—
The pale face of the dying Christ is there,
And cursed forever is thy fatal air,—
Dolce far niente.

THE YELLOW ROSE.

Why send the yellow rose to me?
What care I for that foolish sign?
Its language, *Infidelity*,
Comes with bad grace from lips like thine.
Thou shouldst a truer type have shown,
And sent a broken straw to me;
For trouble, trouble I have known,
Deceitful one, from knowing thee.

I loved thee once,—pure was the flame,
And truthful was my earnest vow;
But my fond heart hath learned thy shame,
And beats with calm indifference now.
I thought thee honest, noble, brave,
A man from grovelling passions free;
But I despise the abject slave
That time hath proven thee to be.

I loved thee once, nor wonder now
At that affection's strong control.
Who would not think that massive brow
The temple of a lofty soul?
Go, with thy flattering voice, and sing
In other ears thy dulcet strain;
But all the magic thou canst bring
Will never win my trust again.

I loved thee once as only those
  Can love whose hearts have blossomed *late*,
Unchanging to a long life's close,
  Content to still love on and wait.
But then I thought thee true and brave,
  A man from grovelling passions free.
How can I prize the abject slave
  That time hath proven thee to be?

THE VISIT OF THE BARDS.

How softly in my quiet room
  The pale moon sheds her tender beams,
As in alternate light and gloom
  I weave my fancy dreams.
    Around my bed
    Mine own loved dead
Look on me with their faded eyes,
  While from the tombs of ages fled,
The kings of song arise.

They come from silent Syrian shades,
  From Grecian groves and Roman bowers,
Their proud brows wreathed with laurel braids,
  Their quaint harps twined with flowers.
    In lofty strain
    With clear refrain
That fills the listening soul with fire,
  Those grand old minstrels sing again
The triumphs of the lyre.

They sing of Israel's monarch, Saul,
That king unmoved by love or fear;
Who even from the dead dared call
Jehovah's aged seer.
He who had lain
His hands profane
On God's own priests with malice deep;
Yet gentle David's melting strain
Could make that tyrant weep.

They of that barbaric court,
Where Nero's hand the sceptre swayed,
And of the wild arena's sport,
Where brethren were betrayed.
Where kindred ties
And infant cries
Woke laughter rude and heartless jeers;
Yet let the voice of song arise,
That friend was moved to tears.

They sing of harps victorious all,
Of lyres triumphant everywhere,
Of minstrels crowned in bower and hall
By knight and lady fair.
I strive in vain
To learn the strain
That haunts me with its mystic tone.
There,—let me sink to sleep again,
For bards and harps are gone.

HYACINTHS.

YES, faded are the graceful blooms
  Thy white hands held when first we met;
But wandering through the lonely rooms
  I think I breathe their fragrance yet.
The music of thy low, sweet tone
  Brought back a dream of happier hours;
And kneeling down when thou wert gone,
  I gathered up thy scattered flowers.

And then I brought the antique vase,
  All stored with tender memories, down,
And wiped the dust from Sappho's face,
  And brightened up her laurel crown.
Fair were the days when o'er its rim
  The passion rose leaves fell in showers.
Alas! to one whose hopes are dim,
  'Tis well to bring the hyacinth flowers.

Faith is their language; far beyond
  The things that meet our mortal sight,
The hushed affections, pure and fond,
  Shall ope their petals to the light.
And even here, 'mid wrecks of art,
  Dust-covered talents, wasted powers,
Pure faith shall yet redeem the heart,
  And leave a place for heavenly flowers.

And so I keep the blossoms, dear,
Thy white hands clasped when first we met;
And softly in my listening ear
Thy sweet, low tones are murmuring yet;
And through the mist I see a star
Shine calmly down on Babel's towers.
O Peace! I hail thee from afar,
The spirit of the hyacinth flowers.

THE TRESS OF GOLDEN HAIR.

Upon the frozen earth I found,
Just at the dawning light,
A folded paper, fastened round
With ribbon pure and white;
Some passer by had dropped it there,
And as I opened it with care,
What was the prize that met my sight?
A tress of golden hair!

Now to my grieving lips I press,
While tears are falling fast,
This little talismanic tress,
In memory of the past;
For none but infant heads could bear
A curl so silken, soft, and fair.
Thou hast a spell around me cast,
Lost tress of golden hair!

The little head I sadly miss
From breast and cradle now,
Had many a curl as bright as this
On pure and sinless brow.
O gentle dove! O angel fair!
Thou never more wilt slumber there,
And all that thou hast left me is
A tress of golden hair.

Ah! more than one bright sunny curl
Is hid in secret nooks,
In casket rich with gem and pearl
In old and faded books;
And many a ring and bracelet rare
Inclose a silken relic fair
Of the lost boy or angel girl
With wealth of golden hair.

O silken curl, I fain would know
Where the fair head doth rest
From whence ye came,—beneath the snow
Or on a mother's breast?
Are ye a relic kept to wear
As talisman against despair,
Whose touch could make dried fountains flow,
Lost tress of golden hair?

Thou on whose heart the bright head lay
That wore this severed tress,
I know thy sad lips will not say
Thy heart doth prize it less,

That stranger tears have fallen there,
That stranger hands, with tender care,
Put gently, lovingly away,
Thy tress of golden hair.

LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

God be thy guide
O'er the dark waters that around thee rise;
May every fitful change of wind and tide
But bear thee nearer to thy native skies!
This is my prayer, my earnest prayer, for thee.
Earth hath no rest for one so sensitive:
A lofty soul in those deep eyes I see,
That craveth more than earth can ever give.
God be thy guide!

God be thy guide!
Place thou thy trust in Him when tempest-tost,
And thy frail bark will o'er the billows glide
Calm and secure—(where mine, alas! was lost).
Trust not to human love, for through all time
It has but served to sever and divide
The soul from Heaven. O to that blissful clime
God be thy guide!

RELIGIOUS POEMS.

GETHSEMANE.

I THINK, could I behold the bowers
Where my Redeemer bent the knee,
And breathe the fragrance of the flowers
Of sanctified Gethsemane,
And with my sinful lips once press
The turf on which my Saviour trod,
Anointed thus, then could they bless
And praise and serve thee, O my God!

I know not if the Kedron brook
Doth water still the solemn glade,
Nor if it bears aught of the look
It bore when there our Saviour prayed;
But though the Kedron floweth not,
And thou art bare of flowers or tree,
To me thou art earth's holiest spot,
O sanctified Gethsemane!

There is a sad and soothing charm
  Even in thy name, O sacred earth!
That stills like drops of magic balm
  The turbid waves of passion's birth;
And thou hast even power to set
  My captive heart from fetters free.
I only sin when I forget
  The sorrows of Gethsemane.

'Tis said that every earthly sound
  Goes trembling through the voiceless spheres,
Bearing its endless echoes round
  The pathway of eternal years.
Ah! surely, then, the sighs that He
  That midnight breathed, the zephyrs bore
From thy dim shades, Gethsemane,
  To thrill the world forevermore!

Is it this power's electric start
  That toucheth souls with love divine?
That bringeth to my brother's heart
  That calm that cometh not to mine?
Is it the tears that bathed His face,
  That from the clouds in rain-drops pour,
Baptizing, in a shower of grace,
  The sinful earth forevermore?

I know not, but I fain would trace
  O'er burning deserts long and wide,
That I might look upon the place
  Where my Redeemer lived and died;

And fallen tower and broken wall
Of His loved city I would see,
And thou, the holiest spot of all,
O sanctified Gethsemane!

THE OLIVE STAR.*

It sheds its gentle ray,
Night and day,
Above the spot where my beloved dwells;
It gleams, in festal hours,
'Mid incense, light, and flowers,
The swell of organs and the chime of bells.

When hushed the organ's tone,
And aisles are lone,
And waxen tapers fade, it grows not dim,
But through the solemn night
It burns most clear and bright,
Shedding its constant light alone for Him.

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* In Catholic countries, there is a lamp, filled with olive oil, burning day and night before the altar on which the blessed sacrament is kept.

Ever before the ark
It shines, to mark
His presence,—to this faith my spirit clings,
As once of old, a star
Brought wise men from afar,
Unto the cradle of the King of kings.

And thus, believing heart,
Frail as thou art,
Before thy day is spent, thy night-lamps trim;
Kindle a burning fire
Of love and pure desire,
And on its flames aspire to dwell with Him.

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

'Tis midnight! and a fragile bark
Is tempest-tost on Galilee.
Behold, the skies above, how dark!
Beneath, how wildly heaves the sea!
While vision of impending death
The shrinking crew with terrors thrill,
High, high above the tempest's breath
Is heard one whisper, "Peace, be still!"

That whisper calms the fearful blast,—
The waters sleep, the storm is o'er;
The watchers know the danger past,
And the frail vessel nears the shore.

Well may they look in mute amaze,
And marvel at this mighty will,
Who with a word the tempest stays,
And makes the stormy waves "be still."

O Saviour! thus my sinful heart,
A watcher on life's stormy sea,
Sees, one by one, its hopes depart,
And in its anguish calls on thee.
Stretch forth thine arm across the waves,
Subdue the frenzied passion thrill;
Speak to the tempest when it raves,
That soothing whisper, "Peace, be still!"

KYRIE ELEISON.

THY path is o'er the lofty hills,
Mine through the valleys still and deep;
Thy strain with pure devotion thrills,
Mine makes the sad and lonely weep.
We are unlike and far apart,
And yet united heart to heart,—
For each hath learned the mournful plaint
Of sorrowing sinner, suffering saint,
Kyrie Eleison.

Thine was the path that seemed the best,
A glorious mission from on high;
But thou hast memories in thy breast
That may not sleep and cannot die.
And 'mid the strife of human wills,
Thou lookest down on earthly ills
With patient calmness. Bend thy knee,
And say once more this prayer with me,
Kyrie Eleison.

My lowest whisper in the vale
Can reach thy home upon the hills,
While thine, breathed softly on the gale,
Comes murmuring down like mountain rills.
O mild apostle! wrong and ruth
Can never turn thee from the truth;
And never more thy sandalled feet
May press my path. Let us repeat
Kyrie Eleison.

Now from the valley, still and deep,
Where meek-eyed martyrs lived and died,
I seek thy mountain, rough and steep,
And fain would climb its barren side.
Alas for me! I cannot bear
The breathings of its purer air.
Let all good souls repeat the plaint
Of sorrowing sinner, suffering saint,
Kyrie Eleison.

THE ESPIRITU SANTO.

"This beautiful flower is to be found on one particular part of the Isthmus, a short distance from Panama. It requires little earth for vegetation, growing among heaps of stones. It appears to be a description of lily, with a curious-shaped vase, on opening the lid of which, the most perfect and beautiful fac simile of a dove is found within. The white wings are half spread, as if about to take its farewell of earth, and soar to some brighter region. The natives call it the *Espiritu Santo*, or 'Holy Spirit.'"—PANAMA STAR.

WE find it not 'mid native flowers,—
It is no blossom we have known;
But far away from garden bowers,
It grows in crevices of stone;
A stranger of the floral kind,
With fair bell drooping from the light,
In whose pure bosom we may find,
Like gem in casket softly shrined,
A tiny dove, with pinions white
Half spread, as if for heavenward flight,
Espiritu Santo.

So once a dove, with pinions spread,
Went from the ark o'er waters wide;
So once it crowned the Saviour's head,
By the baptismal Jordan's side.
Of this the gentle teacher thought,
Who turned away from wealth and fame,
And to this lonely region brought
The saving faith that Saviour taught;
From him this lowly blossom came,
To bear the sweet appropriate name,
Espiritu Santo.

And from our paths as far apart
As desert region, drear and lone,
In many a meek and humble heart
The Holy Spirit dwells unknown;
The drooping head, the lowly air,
Hides the rich treasure from our sight.
Unknown the work, unheard the prayer,
That evermore lives sweetly there;
And there, as if prepared for flight,
Dwells the fair dove, with pinions white,—
Espiritu Santo.

SAUL OF TARSUS.

Across the first disciple's path
That dark avenging spirit came,
With fearful power of hate and wrath,
A heart of gall and tongue of flame;
And scenting victims from afar,
He hurried, in his thirst for blood,
To wage against the true and good
A fierce, exterminating war.
Woe to the brethren when they fall
Beneath the power of wicked Saul!

As poets' dream, and painters' love,
Make beautiful the plainest fact,—
As formed by sunbeams far above
The iris spans the cataract,—

As in lone caverns, deep and dim,
Gleams the explorer's taper light
On colonnade and stalactite,
So fell the light of God on him,
And his dark soul bright jewels wore,
That eye had ne'er beheld before.

O wondrous change! Behold him now!
His feet are turned from worldly ways;
Love's halo lights his darkened brow,—
The Christian's persecutor prays.
Baptismal tears have washed from gore
That chosen soul; his heart is calm,
A sacred vessel filled with balm,
That overflows forevermore
In deeds of Christian love to all,—
Behold our Lord's apostle, Paul!

Changed is the voice that erst had sent
Its mandates forth in wrath and pride,
As, sweetly clear and eloquent,
It flows in full impassioned tide
Adown the crowded aisles of time,
And echoing still in thrilling starts,
From hidden nooks in human hearts,
That glorious living faith sublime
Spreads over nations far and wide
The worship of the Crucified.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

We may scatter our couch with roses,
And sleep through the summer day,
But the soul that in sloth reposes
Is not in the narrow way.
If we follow the chart that is given,
We never need be at a loss;
For the only way to heaven
Is the royal way of the Cross.

To him who is reared in splendor
The Cross is a heavy load;
And the feet that are soft and tender
Will shrink from the thorny road;
But the bonds of the soul must be riven,
And gold must be held as dross;
For the only way to heaven
Is the royal way of the Cross.

We say we will walk to-morrow
The path we refuse to-day,
And still with our own lukewarm sorrow
We shrink from the narrow way.
What heeded the chosen eleven
How the fortunes of life might toss,
As they followed their Master to heaven
By the royal way of the Cross?

FOREVER.

God breathed the breath of life into this clay,
And bound it to the earth till death shall sever;
Then shall the dust drop from its wings away,
And leave the soul to joy or pain forever.
And yet we idle on the shores of time,
Where death's dark angels evermore are flying.
Lift up, O Christian souls, the voice sublime,
And sound in thunders to the nations dying,
The dread forever.

Few are the workers, broad the harvest-fields,
And God's apostles on soft cushions dreaming!
How will they answer when his vineyard yields
Such slender growth, and Satan's garners teeming?
Will he not ask, O shepherd, for the sheep
That he hath given to thy earthly keeping?
That thou mightst guide them up the stony steep,
And when they faltered, sound with voice unsleeping,
The dread forever.

Where is the faith that He, the crucified,
Left to the earth when He to heaven ascended?
Where is the spirit that should be the guide
Of his loved Church till time and earth were ended?
Do we possess it, we, the vain and weak,
Wasting God's heritage on earthly pleasure?
Throw off these grovelling cares of time, and seek
The early faith and boundless love that measure
The great forever.

O Christian souls, arise, and for the sake
Of the dear blood poured out for them unsparing,
Throw off that fatal apathy, and take
The sons of sin and sorrow to your caring,
Nor longer slumber on the shores of time,
Where death's dark angels evermore are flying;
Arise, arise, and lift the voice sublime,
And sound in thunders to the nations dying
The dread forever!

ASPIRATIONS.

I WOULD go up on skylark's wing,
If but my weary chains were riven,
And with a voice triumphant sing,
Before the very gates of heaven.
But this is not
The minstrel's lot,
With earth's affections round him clinging,
Thus to arise,
And pierce the skies,
And charm the angels with his singing.

My morning song has far less power
Than my repentant prayer of even;
And the low sighs of sorrow's hour
More surely ope the gates of heaven.

Though high the notes
That sweetly float
From warm and passionate emotion,
Repentant love
Doth send above
The purest offering of devotion.

THE FOLLOWERS OF THE CROSS.

Not to that city on the plain,
Where pilgrims flock from many a clime,
I watch to-night that shadowy train
Pass down the solemn aisles of time;
Onward they march, with banners red
With blood from Calvary's crimson tide,
The followers of the thorn-crowned head,
The warriors of the Crucified.

See from the cross, the rack, the wheel,
The martyr bears his victor crown,
And claims the stake, the stone, the steel,
As royal trophies of renown;
And o'er the burning desert plain,
And through the trackless forest wide,
With dying breath he tells again
The story of the Crucified.

The young, the old, the weak, the strong,
The maiden fair, the pilgrim gray,
Down pathless ages pass along,
And sing rejoicing on their way.
Praise Him who took a form of clay,
And poured from head, and hands, and side,
The stream that washed our sins away,—
All glory to the Crucified!

How many a ruthless Saracen
Bent to the red-cross standard bright!
What Moslem towers have fallen when
Assaulted by the Christian knight!
And at the guarded castle gate,
In prison cell, in hall of pride,
How many captives yet await
The summons of the Crucified!

Ages have passed, and still they come.
"Thou seest them not!" Then blind thou art.
The Cross is reared in many a home,
And blood is poured from many a heart.
The patient brother, bent with care,
The sister fading by thy side,
Are martyrs; many a cross they bear
For love of Him, the Crucified.

WE ARE HIS CHILDREN STILL.

We are his children still,
Though wandering far and wide,
Through paths of sin and ill,
From our kind Father's side.
The lamp of love is burning
On Zion's lofty hill,
To welcome our returning,—
We are his children still.

Though earthly ties may break,
And human promise fail;
Though fondest friends forsake,
And bitterest foes assail;
Come, broken-hearted weeper,
And learn his blessed will:
The Lord will be thy keeper,—
We are his children still.

Come, mourner, in thy woe,
Come, pilgrim, faint and worn,
Come, leper, bending low
Beneath a cold world's scorn.
In mercy he reproveth:
Take not his chiding ill.
"He chasteneth whom he loveth:"
We are his children still.

HAST THOU NO FAITH.

Hast thou no faith to be thy stay,
When waves of passion roll?
No love to shed its gentle ray
Around thy tempted soul?
Hast thou no mother, sister, wife,
God's holy page to ope,
And pour upon thy stormy life
The balm of Christian hope?
Are there but gloomy skies above,
Beneath but waters dark?
Then come, thou lone and weary dove,
Take shelter in the ark.

Why shouldst thou falter? What hath earth
To which thy heart would cling,
Where tears so often blend with mirth,
And joy doth sorrow bring?
What day hath passed thou didst not grieve?
Reflect, O child of dust!
Turn to thy God, repent, believe,
And place in him thy trust.
What is the laurel-wreath of fame,
The clasp of earthly love,
Or friendship's joys, to that pure flame
Which leads the soul above?

O glorious faith, thy light hath made
Life's heaviest burdens sweet;
Upon thy breast our souls are laid,
Thy counsel guides our feet.
The purest earthly love or bond
Is parted with the breath,
And only faith could look beyond
That gloomy portal, death.
And even here all gloom hath fled,
For God this gift hath given,
And made the Christian's dying bed
The gate to enter heaven.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

"Thy holy will be done!" I cried;
"Henceforth, O Lord! thy cross I bear;"
But oh! how soon, when sorely tried,
My triumph turned to pleading prayer!
"Spare me, O God! thy blessed light;
Shut not from me the glorious sun!
I could not lose the gift of sight,
And humbly say, Thy will be done."

My prayer was heard; my longing eyes
Again beheld the light of day;
And I, in my conceit more wise,
Had taught my heart at last to say,

God's will be done! but when the breast
That I in childhood leaned upon,
Was borne to its last earthly rest,
I could not say, "His will be done!"

With pleading cry and anguished clasp,
I held mine infant to my heart,
Although I knew that death's rough grasp
Was slowly tearing us apart.
How could I lay thee with the dead,
My beautiful, my only one!
Give to the dust that golden head,
And meekly say, "God's will be done?"

O, Saviour! thou hast wept and died
For many faithless ones like me,
Who follow thee up Tabor's side,
Yet shrink from climbing Calvary.
Alas! if this should be the test
Of conquered sin and victory won,
That losing all we love the best,
We truly say,—"God's will be done!"

WATCH AND PRAY,

"THAT YE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION."

ST. MATTHEW 26 : 41.

WATCH and pray!
Mother, whose babe is upon thy breast,
Close not thy drooping lids and say,
This is a time for rest.
Wake! for the jewel thou hast to keep,
Thou shalt restore at the judgment day;
What if it rust in thine hour of sleep?
Rouse thee, to watch and pray!

Watch and pray!
Beautiful girl, in thy first love-dream;
Give not thy soul's best love to clay,
Fair though thine idol seem.
Broad are the fields of the heart's romance,
Stretching afar from the narrow way;
Turn, I beseech, from the tempter's glance,
Ever to watch and pray.

Watch and pray!
That thou be kept from temptation free,
Man in thy prime, lest thou lead astray
Those who shall trust in thee.
To the lowly home and the heart of gloom,
Thy love may pierce with its lightning ray.
Oh! lest thou hurl a soul to doom,
Cease not to watch and pray.

Watch and pray!
Thou who hast wealth, lest thy brother's cry
Reach not thine ear from the lonely way
Where he is left to die.
Is it enough thou shouldst bend the knee,
Turning from sorrow and want away?
"As ye do unto them ye do unto me."
Cease not to watch and pray.

Watch and pray!
Genius, thou with the talents ten,
What hast thou in thy waning day
Done for thy fellow-men?
Bard of the Lord's anointed, crowned,
Thou hast a fearful debt to pay;
Thou with thy human passions bound,
Well mayst thou watch and pray.

PATRIOTIC PIECES.

COLUMBIA'S LYRE.

THERE are no names of ancient days
To grace Columbia's lyre;
No bard of old heroic lays
Drew music from her wire;
No minstrel of the grand crusade
Hath roused our nation's fire;
Few are the wreaths, but none shall fade,
That deck Columbia's lyre!

There are no ivy-covered towers
Of tyrant king or chief;
No place in history of ours
For knight's heraldic leaf.
But we record the noble deeds
Of patriot son and sire,—
And leaves shall spring from holiest seeds
To deck Columbia's lyre!

Why should we care for blood that runs
Through kings with sluggish wave?
Why seek high names for noble sons,
As wise as they are brave?
The haughty scorn of brainless lords
May wake our mirth or ire,
But shall not taint the hallowed chords
Of free Columbia's lyre!

WASHINGTON'S ARMY IN DECEMBER, 1776.

They faltered not, though worn and spent,
That sad and weary band,
Upon their holy mission bent,—
To free their native land!
They faltered not, though snow and sleet
Was crimsoned with their bleeding feet;
Not laden they with food and tent,
But rifles old and banners rent
Was all their store, as forth they went,
Those men of 76!

O Assanpink! O Delaware!
Ye could unfold a tale
Of silent suffering, mute despair,
By watchfires waning pale;

But ye are voiceless; none may know
The tears that wet those beds of snow,
And sanctified each spot of earth
That bore the hope of freedom's birth,—
Shame, that no stone records *their* worth,
Those men of 76!

The lofty monument and fane
Marks still the spot where Spartans bled;
And must we look for them in vain
Where holier blood was shed?
Shall strangers passing through the land
Find not one record of that band?
Well may our hearts indignant swell,
When our own children cannot tell
The places where those heroes fell,
Those men of 76!

VICTORIOUS.

Huzza! the joy-bells sound the merry peal,
The cannons roar, the sun shines bright and glorious;
Our private griefs are hushed,—the public weal
Is greatest now,—the Union is victorious!
Brave men have died, that we this hour might see,
Free as the dew of heaven their red blood showering;
We know not who the fallen patriots be;
And, though the dread suspense be overpowering,

We will rejoice and ring the merry peal,
  While cannons roar and skies are bright and glorious,—
This is a triumph for the public weal,
  Huzza, huzza! our Union is victorious!

Speak not of them with grief,—those heroes dead!
  A radiance, from their country's glory borrowing,
Shall shine like brilliant stars in ages fled,
  When those who mourn them now are done with sorrowing.
They went not to defend the sacred cause
  With craven hearts or spirits faint and trembling;
They sought not to enforce unholy laws.
  God speeds the right,—and we, to-day assembling,
Huzza! while joy-bells ring the merry peal,
  And cannons roar, and skies are bright and glorious;
All private griefs are hushed,—the public weal
  Is greatest now,—our Union is victorious!

Now shall Columbia rise to fresher life,
  As, after winter, comes the time of flowering;
Unstained her banners by the fearful strife,
  And still her eagles o'er the hill-tops towering;
Still shall she turn her clear, triumphant glance
  To the old nations that are held in slavery;
And when her statesmen speak the word, advance!
  They are not wise who doubt her power and bravery!
Then let the joy-bells ring a merry peal,
  The cannons roar, the skies shine bright and glorious;
This is a triumph for a nation's weal,
  Huzza, huzza! Columbia is victorious!

ON THE DEATH OF MAJOR-GENERAL O. M. MITCHELL.

ANOTHER gone, a gallant heart,
A soldier brave, a scholar high;
We watched him in each glorious part,
Almost forgetting he could die.
A friendless boy, from lowly life
He pressed his upward path alone,
Then mingled in his country's strife,
And snatched his laurels and was gone.

No; is a soldier's glory all
This high and restless spirit won?
Ages from now shall worth recall,
And science bless her gifted son.
But life is not at love's control,
And death hath closed that fiery eye;
But the unconquered, restless soul
Hath gone where genius cannot die.

And so they perish one by one,
In whom our country puts her trust;
At morn they lead to victory on,
At night they slumber in the dust.
And day by day Columbia weeps
Some brilliant star forever fled,
And as her holiest treasure, keeps
The memory of her gallant dead.

GENERAL KEARNEY.

Far from the fearful cannon's rattle
The soldier sleeps,—his work is o'er;
And on the blood-red field of battle
His voice will sound the charge no more.
No morning reveille will waken
The chieftain from his slumbers deep;
His soul its final march hath taken,—
Well may a sorrowing nation weep.

Our flag hath lost a brave defender,
A name of terror to the foe,
A soul that would no right surrender
While his good arm could strike a blow.
To duty true, to fear a stranger,
As those who knew him best can tell,
He gloried in the post of danger,
And in the path of duty fell.

Well, let him sleep, the gallant-hearted,
Sleep, in a nation-honored grave;
His name was traced, ere he departed,
Amid the records of the brave.
And if we grieve to tell the story,
'Tis for ourselves we breathe the sigh,
Not for the soldier crowned with glory,
Who died as heroes love to die.

THE LYRE'S GREETING.

Once more shall be thy willow wreaths unbound,
And myrtle garlands braided round each wire;
To greet the brave shall thy proud notes resound,
And bear them to their rest, triumphant lyre!
And thou shalt tell their deeds in lady's bower—
Through the green forest—on the bounding sea;
And o'er them sing, with glad exultant power,
The glorious anthem of the brave and free,
Triumphant lyre!

Thou who hast sent our heroes to the war,
Thrilling their hearts with patriotic strain,
Behold, we bring them back from fields afar!
Hast thou no dirge of sorrow for the slain?
Wilt thou not mourn the gifted and the brave,
When falls the clay upon each gallant breast?
Ah no! above them let green laurels wave,
And songs of victory haunt their place of rest,
Triumphant lyre!

"Whom the gods love die young,"—and thus to die
For our loved country, is it cause for tears?
They fell 'neath banners proudly floating high,
And shouts of victory sounding in their ears.
It is not meet with sad and solemn march
To greet Columbia's heroes when they come;
We would exchange for song and laurelled arch
The black-draped banner and the muffled drum,
Triumphant lyre!

True son, kind brother, and unchanging friend,
Proud lips shall whisper as they breathe each name,
And gentle forms shall o'er their coffins bend,
And learn their worth and spread afar their fame.
From their young blood shall spring a thousand blooms,
And love of country shall the fruitage be,
And my frail woman's hand may from their tombs
Gather at least a laurel wreath for thee,
Triumphant lyre!

Then once again let thy proud notes resound,
Lyre of my country! thus we greet the slain:
If all were lost and freedom's eagle bound,
Then were it well to wake a sorrowing strain;
But not till then. In this victorious hour,
While her young martyrs in our midst we see,
Wake, proudly wake, with glad exultant power,
The glorious anthem of the brave and free,
Triumphant lyre!

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

We hold self-evident the truths here stated:
That all men are with certain rights endowed;
That the Almighty never hath created
Man's neck to be by yoke of tyrant bowed;

That life and liberty the Maker gave him,
And freedom in pursuit of happiness;
Will, to resist the powers that would enslave him,
To know his rights, and yield to nothing less.
So we, the people, rising in our might,
Strike for our homes, our freedom, and the right!

For safety governments are instituted,
Deriving from the governed all their powers;
But when they grow destructive and polluted,
'Tis time to change them,—thus we alter ours.
Long have we borne abuse and usurpation,
Nor sought a change for light or transient cause;
But now we turn from hopeless desolation,
To form a Union built on equal laws;
And we, the people, rising in our might,
Strike for our homes, our freedom, and the right!

Long we, with patient sufferance, bore oppression,
Denied all wholesome laws for public good,
Bent meekly to a tyrant power's aggression,
Or paid the penalty in tears and blood.
Our just complaints were all despised and slighted,
Our privilege of petition was denied.
Now we by wrongs and injuries are united,
And vainly despots seek to stem the tide;
For we, the people, rising in our might,
Strike for our homes, our freedom, and the right!

When overburdened with unjust taxation,
And law and liberty is but a name,
The stern necessity for separation
Becomes imperative,—and we proclaim
That Britain's king and subjects, wheresoever
We meet hereafter, unto us shall be
Foes if in war, friends if in peace,—that never
Will we pay tribute more on land or sea;
For we, the people, rising in our might,
Strike for our homes, our freedom, and the right!

And these United States, this new-born nation,
By representatives assembled now,
Do make this firm and solemn declaration,—
'Almighty God, do thou record the vow,—
That we are free, henceforward and forever,
From all allegiance to the British crown;
That here, to-day, we boldly break and sever
The galling chains that long have kept us down.
And we, the people, rising in our might,
Strike for our homes, our freedom, and the right!

Henceforth, we set Great Britain at defiance,
And claim that these United States are free
To levy war, make peace, contract alliance,
As other nations do; and henceforth we,
Among the powers of earth, will keep the station
Entitled us by God and nature's laws.
Trusting in Him, we make this declaration,
And risk life, fortune, honor, in our cause.
What can resist a people in their might,
Striking for home, for freedom, and the right?

OUR BANNER.

I KNEW our heroes would not fail,
Nor idle swords in scabbards rust,
When armed traitors dare assail,
And drag our banner in the dust!
I knew the blood of noble sires,
With which its folds were often wet,
Would feed the hot indignant fires
In gallant hearts, and would not let
This dark dishonor rest on thee,
Thou starry banner of the free!

They who have differed now unite,
And turn one front upon their foes;
They press together to the fight,
And leave their quarrel till the close.
Their hearts are true, their cause is just,
"The Union!" is their battle-cry;
Their standard is a sacred trust,
They will defend it till they die,
And make the proud Palmetto tree
Bend 'neath the banner of the free!

O gallant heroes, noble band!
We watch you with exultant pride;
All feuds forgetting, take your stand,
And march to battle side by side.

We hush the breathings of regret
For husband, brother, son and sire,
Whose deeds of lofty daring yet
May wreath Columbia's thrilling lyre,
And win a world's respect for thee,
Thou starry banner of the free!

THE MISSION.

I MAY not in the battle's van
Press forward at the trumpet's breath,
Nor by thy side, my brother man,
March on to victory or death;
But I will tell these sons of thine
Of noble deeds on field and wave,
And rouse new heroes while I twine
Fresh garlands round the patriot's grave,
And strike the freeman's lyre for thee,
Dear country of the brave and free!

I may not in thy Senate halls
Arise to make a nation's laws;
But let me, where the fire-light falls,
Beside thy hearthstone, plead thy cause,
And teach thy youth to wield the pen,
The sword, the spade, with honest pride,
As heirs of those heroic men
Who for their freedom fought and died;
Thus would I praise and honor thee,
Dear country of the brave and free!

Go, brothers, bear thy blazoned shields
To crown the mount where science sits,
And let Columbia's battle-fields
Eclipse the fame of Austerlitz.
While in the hall and by the hearth,
'Mid Northern snows and Southern blooms,
I cull the flowers of glory's birth,
To twine around the sacred tombs
Of those who lived and died for thee,
Dear country of the brave and free!

COLUMBIA'S GALLANT DEAD.

In many a brilliant hall,
Where sounds the choral strain,
Will lonely, sorrowing hearts recall
Columbia's gallant slain.
From many a lowly hearth
From which the light is fled,
Shall pallid lips proclaim your worth,
O brave, heroic dead!

You heard your country's call,
And bravely rushed to arms,
To vindicate her right, or fall
In battle's dread alarms.

Behold, the flag still waves
For which your blood was shed;
And love shall sanctify your graves,
O brave, heroic dead!

O sing the lofty strain,
And twine the laurel braid!
Though light from hall and hearth may wane,
Your glory shall not fade.
Your comrades could but give
A rude, uncoffined bed;
But in our hearts your names shall live,
O brave, heroic dead!

UNFURL THE BANNER.

Unfurl the banner, let it wave
Inscribed with that unsullied name!
The toiling masses, true and brave,
Will welcome it with loud acclaim.
The people's hearts are centred there,—
In hopeful silence they await
The waving of that flag, to bear
Their favorite to the chair of state.

Unfurl the banner! there is nought
That noble hearts so much detest,
As lofty place by treachery bought,
Or vice in robes of virtue dressed.

But we have watched his bright career,
In private life and public trust,
And we must honor and revere
A man so noble, pure, and just.

Unfurl the banner, sound the note
Of battle o'er his native soil,
And let his flag to victory float,
Borne by the sturdy sons of toil.
Ye need no pledges,—see his life:
What better pledge should freemen claim?
How few have passed through party strife,
And still retained so pure a fame.

Unfurl the banner, workingmen!
To you he need not call but once.
You know his worth; be ready, then,
To shake the State with your response.
He is the poor man's champion; these
Are words with which his foes agree.
Then fling his banner to the breeze,
And onward march to victory.

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.

THIS is his natal day,—
Let not its memory fade,
While bards can wake a grateful lay,
Or maidens twine a braid.

Let glorious banners float
O'er manhood's proud array,
And bugles sound their clearest note,
On this our chieftain's day.

We know that fields are won,
For there our loved ones sleep.
Come, mother, bring thy noble son,
And hush thine anguish deep.
Thou hast the bright young head
That on thy bosom lay,—
Come with the offering of thy dead
For this our chieftain's day.

One greatest of the land,
In this triumphant hour,
In his proud home doth sorrowing stand
O'er his dead household flower.
And crowds of lowlier state
Have come, in trappings gay,
And hushed their grief, to celebrate
Our chieftain's natal day.

Let not the world forget,
Amid our wrong and grief,
That we, Columbia's children, yet
Are worthy of our chief.
That every patriot heart that bleeds
In this unhappy fray,
Shall bear an offering of bright deeds
For this our chieftain's day.

The voice of joy shall come
From distant southern bowers,
And many a heart afar from home
Will beat response to ours.
And stainless flags will float
O'er many a proud array,
And bugles sound their clearest note
On this our chieftain's day.

CORCORAN'S IRISH BRIGADE.

SONS of green Erin, arise,
And fear not the battle's alarms,
For the freest and happiest land 'neath the skies
Hath need of brave hearts and strong arms.
Come, throw down the pencil and pen,
The chisel, and hammer, and spade,
And let mountain and glen
Give the bravest of men,
For Corcoran's Irish Brigade!

Our chieftain is free from his chain,
With spirit undaunted and high,
And he longs to be off to the battle again,
For Union to conquer or die.
Come on! let us shoulder the gun,
And draw from the scabbard the blade;
There is work to be done,
And fame to be won,
By Corcoran's Irish Brigade!

Our brothers went proudly away,
And were left on the field with the slain,
And well do we know that among us to-day
There are some who will come not again.
But we fear not; our banner floats high,
And our loved are secure in the shade;
Let the death-bullets fly,
'Twill be glory to die
In Corcoran's Irish Brigade!

Then strike for the land of our choice,
And strike for that isle o'er the sea;
Let our women give thanks, and our children rejoice,
That we fight for the land of the free.
Where the foot of the rebel hath trod,
And the bones of our brothers are laid,
Sons of the green sod,
For Columbia and God,
Strike again in the Irish Brigade.

MY JERSEY BLUE.

Yes, here my heroes come on crutches,
With bandaged head and empty sleeve;
And though this sight my warm heart touches,
'Tis not for him alone I grieve.

O not for him who scorned to falter,
Though in the thickest of the strife!
Nor yet for him who on the altar
Of our loved country laid his life.
Are we not children of one mother?
Are we not to the Union true?
You fought for it, my soldier brother!
I pray for it, my Jersey Blue!

When will this dreadful wrong be righted?
When will this fearful war be o'er?
And these fair States be reunited,
And dare the envious world once more?
No answer from the field of battle,
No answer from the Senate hall;
One constant topic,—"man or chattel,"
To break the silence,—that is all.
I will not yield unto another
In love of country, Union true;
And yet I grieve, my soldier brother,
I grieve for her, my Jersey Blue!

Strange, brother (know ye not how blinding
Is passion and fanatic zeal?)
That you should be surprised in finding
"A foeman worthy of your steel!"
Were they so weak and craven-hearted,
Those brothers in rebellion now,
When, side by side, in days departed
You made the foreign foeman bow?

Some now are foes, but there are others
To our loved Union ever true,
Pushed on to meet their death from brothers,—
O mourn for these, my Jersey Blue!

Oh! who may know the strength, the treasure
Our country bleeds from every pore;
Or count the wasted lives, or measure
The fields made fertile with her gore?
And intervention and alliance,
Both clankings of the lion's chain,—
O for the power to bid defiance
To our insulting foe again!
When shall Columbia cease to smother
Her righteous ire? O, if we knew,
We would rejoice, my soldier brother!
Rejoice through-all, my Jersey Blue!

THE NEW JERSEY MONUMENT.

Build high the monument! we will remember
Those brave, true-hearted men,
Who caught the spark from freedom's dying ember,
And lit their camp-fires then.
Here, where the noble Delaware is flowing,
They crossed the frozen wave;
Here, where the field of waving grain is growing,
The patriot found a grave.

Can we forget them, who that dark December
Watched freedom's paling fires?
Up with the shaft! our children shall remember
Those hero-hearted sires.

Here, on the bridge that spans Assanpink's waters,
When liberty was ours,
The Trenton matrons, with their white-robed daughters,
Brightened his way with flowers.
Not now, as on those hurried midnight marches,
With silent fifes and drums,
But 'neath proud banners and triumphal arches
The stately hero comes.
And yet he weeps! O does the chief remember
Those spirits true and tried,
That 'mid the terrors of that dark December
Stood bravely by his side?

And we, to-day, come not, like matrons olden,
To hail a chief adored,
With flowers and song; we pour our treasures golden
Where holy blood was poured,
To place his statue where the beams of morning
Shall earliest kiss his brow,—
Where he, who led the hope at freedom's dawning,
May herald sunrise now!
Then build the monument—record the story!
And while our waters run,
Let the first name upon our page of glory
Be WASHINGTON!

THE MINSTREL'S NAME.

Why shouldst thou seek the minstrel's name,
Whose youth's ambitious dreams are o'er?
Enough to know that praise or blame
May move her spirit nevermore.
What matter that in classic shade
Her lyre learned not its tender tone?
She doth not claim the laurel braid,—
Then let the minstrel sing unknown.

Perhaps at times her burning strain
Denotes a soul by passion tost;
Again, her sympathy with pain
May tell that she hath loved and lost.
To-day the mother's love may gush
In cradle-songs through hall and bower;
To-morrow comes the shuddering hush
Above the faded household flower.

What cares the world if sunshine bright
Haunts with the hopes forever fled,
Or that the still and solemn night
Brings back the voices of the dead?
What though the name thou fain wouldst know,
Is traced on many a marble stone,
Where youthful genius sleeps below?
Still would the minstrel sing unknown.

In that old sanctum hath been heard
Her name, a sweet familiar sound;
Shall stranger tongues pronounce that word
With ghostly memories crowding round?

It may not be; but if at times
The lyre sends forth its trembling tone,
Take if thou wilt the simple rhymes,
But let the minstrel sing unknown.

CAMDEN.

Oh dear old home, alone and weary-hearted,
The minstrel comes again in twilight hours,
But not to sing, as in the days departed,
The tender love-song through thy blooming bowers.
His voice forgets to wake the thrilling numbers,
His saddened soul hath lost its olden fire,
For the dark cypress and the grave-mould cumbers
The hand that tuned the passion-breathing lyre;
The stars look down through drooping boughs above him,
So like the eyes of strangers, stern and cold.
Oh home, old home! thou hast no hearts to love him,
No clasping hands, as in the days of old.

Here is the roof beneath the bending willow,
Where to his side the fond inspirer came;
And brilliant visions floated round his pillow,
And whispered through his sleep the dream of fame;
And from this porch he watched the moonlit river,
And saw the white-robed singers float along,
And heard the voice that made his young heart quiver
With all the tender mysteries of song.

Oh willow bough! bend kindly down above him,
And let him press thee with his fingers cold;
For home, old home, thou hast no hearts to love him,
No clasping hands, as in the days of old.

And where are they, the fondly loved and loving,
Who used to greet him in thy fragrant bowers?
Two, far away, in other lands are roving,
And two are exiles in this land of ours.
And some have to the battle-field departed,
Young patriots, for their stricken country brave;
And one most loved, the true and tender-hearted,
Twice have the violets blossomed on his grave.
Oh friend, lost friend! look from the skies above him,
The minstrel yearns for thee with grief untold;
Here in his home, with no fond hearts to love him,
No clasping hands, as in the days of old.

RICHMOND OF '76.

If I had known what I know now,
The hour I traced those lines for thee,
I had not feared thy broken vow,
Nor prayed thee to "remember me."
The breathings of a fond young heart
Could win thy truth when first we met;
From thee I learned love's mystic art,
And now I dare thee to forget.

My form hath lost its girlish grace,
And time left shadows on my brow;
But to thine eyes my fading face
Hath more than girlish beauty now.
My loneliness had power to win
An entrance to thy gloomy shrine,
And now I reign as empress in
The loneliest heart on earth, save mine.

Thou sittest on thy lofty mount
With thy broad temples wreathed with snow,
And from thine own heart's lava fount
Thou pourest scorn on all below.
Alas for him who dares aspire
To be thy comforter or friend,
For thou wilt pour volcano fire
Where thou shouldst shelter and defend.

Remember me,—ah! thou wert blest
If thou couldst but one day forget;
But no! the serpent in thy breast
Will rend thy very heart-strings yet.
Thou with thy godlike intellect,
Made more than man, art something less,
And all thou lov'st may heaven protect,
Or thou wilt blast what thou shouldst bless.

Our paths of life are far apart,
Yet sorrow draws me to thy side.
I know thou hast an aching heart,
Whence springs thy bitterness and pride.

I know that envy, malice, hate,
From earth's low kennels rail at thee;
And pity for thine adverse fate
Hath made thee what thou art to me.

TO ——.

I CANNOT bear to think of thee
With drooping head and quailing heart.
Look up, my friend, and let me see
The hero that in soul thou art.
Though thou art grieved by broken trust,
And burdened with a world of woes,
Lift up that proud head from the dust,
And fling defiance at thy foes.
Let Priest and Levite, in their pride,
Pass coldly on the other side;
Courage, my friend, for I will be
The good Samaritan to thee.

What though I have no store of gold,
My poverty thou wilt not see,
While to thy fainting lips I hold
The brimming cup of sympathy.
And O, believe, whate'er thy fate,
Through bitter taunt and scorn severe,
Through joy and sorrow, love and hate,
Thou hast a friend unchanging here;

One who will love thee to the last,
Unmindful of thy sinful past.
Wert thou a saint, how could I be
The angel that I am to thee?

The false, ungrateful world may start,
But little care I for its frown.
It worships many a baser heart,
And crushes many a nobler down.
When scornful lips sneer and deride,
And deem my trust an idle jest,
I smile at their delusive pride,
For time will tell who knew thee best.
Thy faults and follies they may show,
Thy nobler deeds they do not know;
And I appeal from their decree,
Whene'er they cast a ban on thee.

THE SONG OF AN EXILE.

I COME, a wanderer o'er tempestuous billows,
Fleeing afar from tyranny and wrong,
And from a frail harp, hung on alien willows,
My soul pours forth the burden of its song.
Hear, kindly hear, Columbia's minstrel daughters!
To clasp your hand in friendship I aspire;
I come, a lowly bard, from Avon's waters,—
Will ye receive me, sisters of the lyre?

Here, on your own bright shores, I give you greeting;
Here, from the lonely home in which I pine,
My heart sends forth this strain with feverish beating,—
Hath no sweet lyre an answering chord to mine?
I seek not entrance to your groves of laurel,
To pluck a chaplet for my quivering wire;
Ye are the roses, I the humble sorrel,—
Will ye receive me, sisters of the lyre?

I heard your strains across the waters ringing,
And learned their music 'mid my native bowers;
And still their charm, to the pale exile clinging,
Hath power to soothe her in the saddest hours.
I court the muses with a saint's devotion,
Or with a lover's passionate desire,—
Forgive, I pray, this burst of wild emotion,
And give me greeting, sisters of the lyre.

O bright ones, spread your kindly mantle o'er me,
For I have seen my loved ones droop and die;
And now, an exile from the land that bore me,
I come to sleep beneath a foreign sky.
The name I bear hath been for many ages
An honored name, unstained by son or sire;
'Tis written proudly on historic pages,—
Then greet me kindly, sisters of the lyre.

Sisters, my cheeks have lost their bloom of roses,
And silver threads are braided in my hair.
Once I was fair; my mirror now discloses
A weary woman, bent with grief and care.

The springtime of my life hath long departed,
My restless soul hath lost its youthful fire;
I come, an exile, sad and lonely-hearted,—
Will ye receive me, sisters of the lyre?

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE.

He earns his living by his hands,—
We see him at his work,—and then
We look upon him as he stands,
A king among his fellow men;
For in the workshop and the mart,
And in the senate's loud turmoil,
He still is found, in mind and heart,
Defender of the sons of toil.

He is the people's friend,—the son
Of Jersey soil; are we not proud
To see the laurels he hath won,
And hear the plaudits of the crowd?
He is the champion of mankind,
The hero of a hundred fights;
His battle-ground, the human mind;
His victories, the people's rights.

I need not say what he has done,—
A million tongues could trumpet that;
Of all his deeds I'll name but one,
Who hath forgotten Barnegat?

The people's trust was not betrayed
By promise vain or lying arts;
For he by noble deeds hath made
A glorious pathway to their hearts.

Friend of the poor, thy goodness springs
Responsive in the grateful heart,
Uniting those, in other things
As distant as the stars apart.
Stand forth before the people's eyes,
And they a noble man shall see;
In battle brave, in council wise,
Well may thy State be proud of thee.

NOBILITY.

They call thee noble! well, in name
Perhaps a noble thou mayst be,
To those who bring the father's fame,
To prove the son's nobility.
I know that thou hast fair broad lands,
And scores of serfs to till the soil,
And that those small and snowy hands
Were never stained by manly toil.
Thy waving grain floats to the breeze,
Thy ships will bear it o'er the sea;
I grant that they can bring thee these,
In proof of thy nobility.

They call thee noble, and thy door
Is thronged with fashion's train, I own;
And yet among the lowly poor,
No gift of thine was ever known.
The altar where thy fathers knelt,
With lying lips thou hast denied,
And every pang thy heart hath felt,
Was crushed beneath the heel of pride.
Yet few can match thy serpent art
For winning souls. Oh, woe to thee!
For many a woman's broken heart
Is proof of thy nobility.

They call thee noble! By the test
Of virtue, honor, purity;
By all that's truest, holiest, best,
Where is thy soul's nobility?
The poor hath blessed thy father's name,
And pure and bright his virtues shine!
Thou worthless son, what meed of fame
Will from thy life descend on thine;
When priest and poet, saint and sage,
The wise and holy all agree,
That *truth* is man's best heritage,
And *worth* the best nobility.

THE FREEDOM OF OPINION.

THE freedom of opinion,—
Its boundaries who can teach?
As broad is its dominion
As thought can ever reach.

Yet you, my favored brother,
Backed by your store of pelf,
Have dared refuse another
The rights you claim yourself.

Your freedom of opinion
Is not for sons of toil,
Nor for the hapless minion
Born on a foreign soil;
You scorn the rights of labor,
And strive, by base control,
To bind your lowly neighbor
In mind, and heart, and soul.

We grant you're good at teaching,
You modern Pharisee,
But we never knew your preaching
And practice to agree.
The glorious institutions
For which our fathers died,
Are doomed, by your pollutions,
To prejudice and pride.

Your freedom of opinion
Must be your dwarfish height;
You seek to clip the pinion
That dares a loftier flight.
Your code of laws and morals
Has but these words within:
Proud wealth shall wear the laurels,
And poverty is sin.

W 13

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proce
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

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